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THE MEANING OF THE WAR FOR GERMANY AND GREAT BRITAIN

AN ATTEMPT AT SYNTHESIS

BY

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CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING

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PREFATORY NOTE

It is right to explain that it was only at the last moment, when on the point of going to press, that I became acquainted with Mr. M. P. Price's *Diplomatic History of the War*. This is a very full and severely impartial account of the various movements and negotiations immediately preceding the outbreak of hostilities. I do not think that there is much substantial difference between Mr. Price's version of the events and my own; but I should wish what I have written to be taken as subject to correction from this source.

The text was all in type before the latest development of German policy at sea; or I should have had to express differently what I have said on p. 120.

W. S.

Christ Church, Oxford,
March, 1915.

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THE MEANING OF THE WAR FOR GERMANY AND GREAT BRITAIN

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THE MEANING OF THE WAR FOR GERMANY AND GREAT BRITAIN[1]

AN ATTEMPT AT SYNTHESIS

I SUPPOSE that there will have been many who, when the war first began and the full magnitude and hôrror of it was borne in upon them, had a difficulty in fitting it into their sense of the overruling Providence of God. But as the months have gone on and the course of events has developed, and the broader outlines and grouping of facts have begun to loom through the mists, little by little, something at least of the deeper meaning and issues of the war has been revealing itself to us. It is early days as yet to build up what we observe into a complete philosophy ; but we are beginning to see that such a philosophy will some day be possible. I am reminded of an experience of my own, more than five-and-forty years ago, in the old Opera House at Dresden, when I first heard Wagner's *Meistersinger*. We were rather late, and the overture had already begun when we took our seats ; and to me, not being a cultivated musician, and being also quite new to Wagner's music, it seemed at first like mere chaos, as if all the instruments in the orchestra had been set to play at their own sweet will

[1] I am careful to speak of 'Great Britain' and 'British', rather than 'England' and 'English', out of deference for the susceptibilities of some patriotic Scots, who suspect us of forgetting the Act of Union. We are very proud of our stalwart Scottish and Irish and Welsh brothers, and we do not forget them. But they must not think that it costs us nothing to sink our own individuality. After all, for her own sons, there is a magic in the name : 'Ye good yeomen whose limbs were made in England !'

without any regard to each other. But then, as one listened, a vein of melody gradually seemed to steal into the confusion, and this by degrees broadened and became more insistent, until at last it seemed to dominate the discord and to bring harmony and beauty into the whole. So at first, in this crisis of human destiny, it seemed as if the very foundations of the moral order were shaken and all the fountains of the great deep broken up. But, as one goes on and the more and more one begins to understand, the more one seems to see that there is a purpose behind it all, and the more one is encouraged to hope that out of the ruins of the old order a new order may arise which will be a distinct advance upon the old, and not the less an advance because certain elements of evil have been drawn from their hiding-places and definitely faced and mastered.

It is possible to join whole-heartedly with the Society of Friends in 'the belief that the method of force is no solution of any question'[1], and yet to recognize distinctly that, in the world as at present constituted, war both may and does discharge more than one very salutary function. There are perhaps five main directions in which we can already see these 'cleansing fires' at work, burning away the morbid products of long peace and material prosperity, and at the same time bringing out on a great scale some conspicuous, and even specifically Christian, virtues. And it is consolatory to think that these good effects are not confined to any one of the belligerents alone, but that they are (perhaps with some differences of manner and degree) common alike to all.

1. A great seriousness has come down over all the

[1] See the striking address, circulated at the very beginning of the war (August 7, 1914), and happily incorporated in Dr. Cheyne's *Reconciliation of Races and Religions*, p. xiii.

combatant nations. There is ample evidence to show that this is just as true of Germany as it is of ourselves and our allies. All Europe was in need of some such sobering and solemnizing influence. The great cities, more especially, were becoming more and more luxurious and pleasure-loving. It seemed as if the higher aims of the spirit were being drowned in gross and growing materialism. All this has been changed. The tremendous issues that are being fought for, and the terrible sufferings and loss of life that are being undergone, have come home to the imagination as nothing on a lesser scale could have done. The effect has been to turn men's minds towards religion. Pamphlets by Professor Deissmann, Dr. Dryander, and others bear testimony to this for Germany, as well as what we may see at home with our own eyes.

2. I do not think we were surprised at the unifying power of the sudden appeal to patriotism. It was what we should all have hoped for, in this country at least, but the reality went beyond our hopes. That the great historic parties in our Parliament would combine, we took for granted. They did it quietly, spontaneously, and resolutely, as we might have expected. But we were not all equally prepared for the generous outburst of the Irish leader, or for the self-restraint and large amount of unanimity shown by the Labour Party. The nation is at this moment united as it has rarely been in our history.

The same spectacle was repeated on the other side of the North Sea. The meeting of the Reichstag on August 4 was, from the German point of view, just as memorable as the meeting at Westminster. But indeed, in all the nations concerned, there has been such a closing of ranks as hardly seemed conceivable.

3. We say that the world is less Christian than we thought it, because this portentous war is possible. But is it not also more Christian than we ever dreamed in its power of rising to the severest heights that Christianity could ever require of it in the way of self-sacrifice and self-devotion? In time of peace there is a danger that our professions may evaporate in sentiment and words. But in time of war there is no choice; when a man goes out to fight, he puts his life in his hands.

We are well aware of the extraordinary courage and devotion that are shown by our adversaries in this conflict. They have faced death in masses, and their ships have gone down at sea (like our own) with their flags flying. We know that they were prepared for enormous losses. They have undergone them with their eyes open and without flinching. But they have been for years, as they remind us, an armed nation. They are deeply imbued with the martial spirit. They have a great and a recent tradition of military successes. They have surrendered themselves without reserve to the spirit of military discipline. In this present war they are conscious of fighting for high stakes, and they had counted the cost before they began.

With us and with most of our allies, it is different. The poor Belgians were surprised in the midst of what must have seemed to them profound peace. Their army was in the midst of reorganization; they were not in the least equipped or ready. The hurricane swept down upon them before they could collect their senses. And yet they did not flinch, and have not flinched, in spite of almost unparalleled sufferings. Both the French and the Russians were only partially prepared. They both had to make up their minds at almost a moment's notice. But, on the other hand,

they had known for years that they were living under the shadow of a volcano, and they had at least the moral preparation of knowing that the eruption might come when they were least expecting it.

With ourselves, at least of the Entente Powers, the suddenness of the strain has been greatest. The great mass of the people were taken by surprise. And I should imagine that there were few who knew beforehand how the nation would take so tremendous a crisis. Would it rise to the full height of the demands upon it, or would it not? Most of us had faith, the faith that is grounded in love. But it was the kind of faith that lived deep down in the bottom of our hearts. We had no recent evidence to produce in support of it. Our enemies were saying that we were a decadent people. We did not believe it, but we also did not feel sure that there might not be some truth in it. We had had a long time of peace, so far as any great demand upon the nation as a whole was concerned, and such a time is apt to weaken the moral fibre; we did not know how far it might have done so. Then, further, our people is a democratic people; every one thinks for himself, and we knew that they would not simply follow each other like a flock of sheep. They would have to be convinced that the war was just and right, and that the call which came to them was a real call. All these things had to be considered, and they all raised questions to which we did not know the answer.

I suppose that what most of us thought was something like this. We had our Expeditionary Force, and we hoped and believed that we should be able to keep up that force, and perhaps increase it as the war went on. But which of us guessed what was really coming? Which of us guessed that men would stream to the

colours as they have done, that whole armies would spring up as if out of the soil, and that—an event unknown in our history—we should enter the lists on the scale of a continental power.

The yet greater wonder is that all this should have been done without a touch of compulsion. Our men have gone out to the war of their own free will and with their eyes open. They have thrown up positions of comparative ease and comfort. They have gone forth to face the extremes of danger and suffering and death, and they have done it with a simple readiness and cheerful alacrity that has astonished the lookers-on.

Nor is it as though the spectacle concerned this country alone. Each of the countries engaged has had its own special forms of manifestation. It is human nature as a whole that bears the credit. It is a real triumph of the spirit over the flesh—in its full length and breadth, the most remarkable that has ever been seen. When we think what it means—the amount of deliberate self-sacrifice and self-devotion that it means—it is borne in upon us that, after all, the world is more fundamentally Christian than it supposed.[1]

4. And then, is there not yet another aspect to all this? Is there not yet another side of the Christian ideal that, out of the heart of all this war and conflict, finds striking and unexpected illustration? It is not exactly the quarter to which we should look for evidence of the meaning of Christian brotherhood; and yet it is forced upon us, without our looking. If it is true that Europe is divided into two great camps that are hostile to each other as wholes, it is no less true that, within each of

[1] 'The Russian religion is the religion of suffering and death; and death is a holy thing. "Readiness to die is the religious side of war".' (*The Times*, on Stephen Graham, *Russia and the World.*)

those camps, there is a feeling of fellowship and brotherhood that is all the more intense in proportion to its concentration. I have just been speaking of the spectacle presented to us by the mustering of our own armies. What a moving scene it has been to the rest of the nation ! We have watched these gallant men going out to fight vicariously for us, and our hearts have gone out towards them—I will venture to say, as they had never done before. We know at last what it is to be members of a nation, and to have those among us who are prepared to take upon themselves the tasks of the nation at the peril of their own lives. We watch them still with the deepest interest, and we cherish the individual touches which help to print the picture upon our memories. Many a pen has done this for us ; but it is natural that we should go especially to that one of our writers who has the Shakespearian gift beyond all others, who has now to his former picture of ' The Fleet in Being ' added as a pendant ' The New Army in Training '. Those little rapid sketches—the Londoners, the North Country, Scotland, the Canadians—each dashed off with a master hand ; the nation may see itself as in a glass, and it is moved by the sight. It will not forget.

And even this, though near it, is not quite the centre of the picture. The true centre is in those trenches, which most of us have to imagine. It is from them that the constant stream is flowing backwards of those who come home to be healed of their wounds. And, even more precious still, is the smaller company of those whom we shall see no more and who are left behind beneath foreign soil. If our feelings towards them are not the counterpart of the very best that Christianity can evoke in us, I do not know what else they are.

There must be always that glowing centre. But,

shading downwards from it and ramifying infinitely through all ranks and classes of the nation, there is the ever-present consciousness of what they each and all are doing in the national cause. For never in the course of our history has there been such a spontaneous stirring of the most multifarious activities, every one vying with his neighbour to see who can contribute most to the needs of the time.

It is not merely the nation, but the empire, of which we have to think. Every colony, every dependency, even the remote islands in the Pacific Ocean have sent each its appropriate gift. If on the smaller scale we have been learning what a county or a nation means, on a larger scale we have been learning what an empire means. And all the parts of it have been responding to all the rest with a tightening of the mutual bonds of gratitude and affection.

Nor yet does the process end even here. This present war is a war of coalitions. Each of the coalitions is made up of a number of nations, particularly that to which we belong. But what an effect the war has had in heightening our appreciation of these other nations! What a new idea have we conceived of Belgium, and of France, and of Russia! It is not only our troops who have been thrown into close contact with these peoples and have been the direct recipients of their helpfulness and kindliness and goodwill, who have got to know them with a certain amount of intimacy on their best side. It is not only these, but we who sit at home and survey the field from a distance. We had our ideas, which were more or less accurate and adequate, but which needed the touch of a stronger emotion to fill them with a deeper meaning. Here again, our thanks are due to those who have enlightened our ignorance and put our thoughts—or

what we would fain regard as our thoughts—into words for us : to Professor Vinogradoff for *The Psychology of a Nation* (Russia), and now to Mr. Stephen Graham for his evidently remarkable book, *Russia and the World* ; to Mr. Clutton-Brock for his *France* ; to Mr. H. A. L. Fisher for *The Value of Small States* ; to Mr. H. W. C. Davis for *What Europe owes to Belgium* ; and to Dr. C. Sarolea for *How Belgium saved Europe.*

5. Yet one more gain must be noted from the war. It is marked in this country ; but there is evidence enough that the same process is going on in Germany. Since the war began there has been on this side the water quite a remarkable output of books and pamphlets, the object of which is to help the nation to a stronger grasp and fuller understanding of its own mission in the world ; of the principles for which it stands, and ought to stand ; of the significance of its past history and its outlook towards the future ; of its relations with other nations, and theirs with it. A large proportion of this literature is of really high quality ; much of it is the work of specialists, who have been moved to contribute from their expert knowledge to the edification of the community as a whole. There has certainly never been a war, and perhaps never a controversy of any kind, which has had so much strong light thrown upon it, not only in its main issues but also in its side issues. In the way of political education there has never been anything like this since Britain became a nation.

And yet with all this manifold activity, with all this widespread diffusion of knowledge, with all this quickened thought and concentrated attention going on at one and the same time, both over the two Empires which I have more particularly in view and over the other allied

nations on each side, there is still one conspicuous gap and failure in the result. Internally, on both sides, we have this heightened grasp and heightened consciousness ; but externally we seem to be even worse, instead of better, off than before. Externally, the contending parties seem to be further removed from each other than ever. For them, heightened consciousness seems only to mean heightened antagonism. All the discussion that has been going on has brought them no nearer. Neither side in the controversy seems as yet to have made the slightest impression upon the other. It is like two hostile batteries, neither of which has succeeded in locating the other's position ; each goes on showering shot and shell on ground where the other is not.

It is this condition of things which has prompted the attempt embodied in the present pamphlet. It is the outcome of an effort to understand the German case as well as our own. The time seems to have come when such an effort ought to be made, and made by many minds. We are indeed still in the region of polemics. I am aware that I shall not be able myself to keep clear of polemics. But I believe that we ought at least to be trying to look beyond these ; we ought to be trying to work towards the standpoint of History, which is like the sun that shines on the evil and on the good. And this aim of ours is by no means only abstract and theoretic ; it must needs have a very practical intention as well. Our thoughts are beginning to run towards Peace ; but we are as yet far from being ready for peace, i.e. for any real peace. It is hopeless to think of peace, with such wholly unreconciled oppositions before us. Our first duty is to try to get behind these oppositions, with a view to their ultimate reconciliation.

I may perhaps state my object in a less ambitious way.

I have just said that I cannot altogether disclaim a polemical purpose. My first thought, when I began to contemplate this pamphlet, was more directly polemical. I asked myself whether it was not possible to do what I think has hardly yet been done—so to state our case that the statement of it could be *put into the hands of a German.* I mean, so to state it that a German reader, if it should ever have one, should not feel injured and insulted at every turn.

In saying this, I am far from wishing to be censorious towards my own countrymen. Looking at both as impartially as I can, I am inclined to think that our own controversial writing compares favourably with the German. At least, the English equivalents for *Lügen* and *Heuchelei* do not occur nearly so often. No doubt there is plenty of strong writing on this side ; but most of it is evidently intended for home consumption. For that purpose it is quite legitimate. But I have in my mind a quantity of controversial writing which—whatever else we may think of it, and my own opinion (if I may say so) of it is high—is at least thoroughly worthy and dignified in tone. Examples would be : the pamphlets put out at the beginning of the war by the Vice-Chancellors of our two Northern Universities (Mr. H. A. L. Fisher and Dr. M. E. Sadler) and another by Dr. G. W. Prothero ; the whole series of papers published in *The Round Table* ; those published by Messrs. Macmillan ; and (if I may for once speak of what is so near home) nearly the whole of the long series published by the Clarendon Press ; there are naturally a few that would come under the head of ' home consumption '. Again, if we turn to books : Professor Ramsay Muir is doubtless frankly one-sided, and Mr. Austin Harrison certainly does not mince matters ; but Dr. Holland Rose is strictly *sachlich und*

anständig. Of the two most prominent authors who brought out books shortly before the war, the late Professor J. A. Cramb, though a good patriot, wrote more from the German point of view than the British, and Dr. Charles Sarolea maintained throughout with equal temperance and lucidity the attitude of the 'good European citizen'. Some few Germans have complained of the Oxford statement of the British case in *Why we are at War*; but they produced practically nothing in support of their complaint; and, considering that it was written at heat on the first outbreak of the war, I believe there is singularly little that we need wish to see retracted. It would not be relevant to speak here of the many American books, but I shall have occasion to refer to most of them later.

The time has come, or is coming, when an attempt at balanced and dispassionate statement should be possible. At last we have a quantity of really authentic material, in the shape of the various Government publications—the German White Book, the British Blue (or White) Book, the French Yellow Book, &c. It is not merely prejudice to say that the German Book is the least valuable of these. It was hurried through at the beginning of the war and was the first to appear; it contains very few documents, and indeed hardly professes to be more than a summary *ex parte* statement. Most valuable of all is the French Book, which bears striking testimony to the skill with which the French Foreign Office is served.

I shall do my best to base my case mainly on these official publications. But I have tried besides to bring to bear all the literature on which I could lay my hands; and in the last few weeks I have had the advantage of access to a number of German books and pamphlets, which have not been generally available.

My chief aim has been—I will not say, to bring about a better understanding between this country and Germany, because at the present moment there is hardly any mutual understanding at all—but at least to pave the way, or begin to pave the way, for some such better understanding in the future.

At the same time I do not think that I shall be more likely to succeed in this attempt by trying to water down the opposition between the two sides. I believe the more hopeful course will be found to be, to face this opposition in all its sharpness, and—only when we have done this—to attempt something in the nature of a more permanent balance or synthesis. I shall, however, in the process of statement, endeavour to reduce each of the two cases to what I conceive to be more nearly its true dimensions, on the strength of such study as I have been personally able to give to it.

I will state the British case first ; then the German ; and finally, try to draw out what I believe to be the permanent significance of both.

A. THE BRITISH CASE

THERE is in this country a widespread conviction that Germany is the real aggressor; and there is a further conviction that this aggression was not due to any momentary impulse, but to a deep-laid plan elaborately worked out and brought to a head at the moment judged most favourable.

There is a great deal to be said for this view, and it is in any case one mode of stating what may be perhaps the ultimate truth. At the same time, this whole question of the aggressor requires very careful definition, as it assumes a different aspect according to the angle or point of view from which it is regarded. When we speak of 'Germany' we may mean several different things. We may mean the German Government as representing the nation; or we may mean the great mass of the nation itself; or we may mean some particular influential section of the nation. And, whichever of these meanings we have in our minds, in any case it must not be too sharply isolated. The Government, through the bureaucracy, ramifies deeply into the nation; it aims at representing the nation; and there is a constant flow and return, action and reaction, of influences proceeding from the nation. Then, when we speak of the mass of the nation, that too is by no means a simple and constant quantity. The nation is divided into a number of sections, each with its own special interests and aspirations. What we really mean by the 'mass of the nation' is the general average, the preponderating views of ordinary people. As distinct from these there is always sure to be an active minority,

with influence perhaps out of proportion to its numbers, because its inferiority in this respect is made up for by greater zeal and by the force of more logical thinking. In any country there will always be these different strains and tendencies ; but in the case of Germany it is specially important that they should be borne in mind, and that we should be quite clear of which we are speaking. It must also be remembered that behind all the divergences of aim and opinion there will always be a great amount of common purpose and common feeling. When we come to apply these considerations to the question how far Germany was the real aggressor, we shall soon see how intricate it becomes, and how many pitfalls there are into which it is easy to stumble. The most obvious sense to have in our mind when we speak of ' Germany ' is the German Government, the responsible body, whatever exactly that may be. It is not necessary for us to go into the question of the German constitution, though it is worth while to remember that in such cases responsibility always shades off downwards and rises by a *crescendo* upwards in almost imperceptible degrees. We must take it as culminating in the highest executive.

But if we thus concentrate our attention upon the Government, we must also have our minds open to the complications introduced by the presence of influences other than those of the Government. And we also must not forget, in weighing the motives and the plans of a Government, that these motives and plans are not all to the front at the same time, but that they stand as it were one behind the other, and some in the remote background. Governments consist of practical people ; and practical people as a rule prefer to think of one thing at a time. They give their best attention to that which is most immediately before them ; and this immediate

object determines their attitude more than other objects which are more remote.

We have spent some time over preliminaries ; but I do not think that this time will have been wasted. Indeed it is more and more borne in upon me that it is only by close attention to the distinctions of which I have been speaking that we can find our way through the tangled web of statement and counterstatement with which we are confronted.

I go back to what I have called the British contention or impression, which certainly is that Germany is the aggressor. In any case, this contention or impression is perfectly bona fide. It is the honest conclusion which our people have drawn from the facts. I will proceed to test it, and to test it (as I have said) more particularly with reference to the responsibility of the German Government.

The lines of argument that would be commonly used in this country fall under three heads, according as they relate (*a*) to the events which immediately preceded the outbreak of the war ; (*b*) to the longer train of which those events formed the culmination ; and (*c*) to the current doctrine or ideas and to the state of national feeling of which the external events were the expression.

I. *Immediate Antecedents.* The Germanic Powers were at least in this sense the aggressors : that it was they who set the ball rolling ; and it may easily be contended that they set it rolling in such a way that it was extremely likely to lead, as it has led, to a general war.

1. This in itself may be held to constitute aggression. I believe that in any case a great load of responsibility lies upon the Germanic Powers for the way in which they opened the discussion. If we are to bring home to them the responsibility for the war, it is to this point more than

to any other that I would attach it. The alternative would be the point at which Germany dispatched her double ultimatum to France and Russia on July 31. At that time Germany acted alone, and her action was decisive. On the previous occasion the two Powers were really working together and I do not think that they could be separated. It must, I am afraid, remain a tenable view that many Germans actually wished for a big war—preferably with Russia alone, probably with France as well as Russia, possibly with all the three Powers of the Triple Entente. It does not follow that the German Government —responsible Germany—wished for this. We may believe rather that the Germanic Powers were equally prepared for either event. Their immediate object was the humiliation and moral subjugation of Serbia. It was quite possible that this end might be attained without anything more than a strong demonstration in Serbia itself. It was by no means certain that Russia would fight ; there were reasons for thinking that she would not wish to fight ; and if she did, the prospect did not seem so very formidable.

One of the chief miscalculations on the German side has been the underrating of the power of Russia. The idea was that Russian organization was not equal to the strain of a great European war. There is an instructive passage in a work of some authority that has come out since the beginning of the war, though six of the seven chapters were written before that date, by Dr. Paul Rohrbach, *Der Krieg und die deutsche Politik*, p. 97 :

> Least of all need we be anxious about Russia. Only one who does not know Russia is in a position to be afraid of her. Only ignorance of the internal relations of Russia can be imposed upon by the vastness of the empire and the numbers of the Russian army. . . . So huge an undertaking as a modern war, which puts an infinitely greater strain upon the organism of the state than any

> war that Russia has hitherto waged, is only possible if order, not in the ordinary police sense of the word, but in the sense of political and national *moral*, is present in the state. This is wanting in Russia.

The whole of the long paragraph is well worth reading. It contains an able comparison of the state of Russia at the time of the Napoleonic invasion and now ; the upshot being that modern conditions have greatly impaired the strength of Russian resistance. In any case the Germanic Powers were not afraid of Russia, either alone or with allies. They also knew that Russia was as yet only half prepared. They were aware that a conflict with Russia in two or three years' time would be more dangerous.

These being the conditions, I conceive that when Austria launched her ultimatum to Serbia, the Germanic Powers knew perfectly well what they were doing. In either event, they stood to win. If Serbia yielded, and Russia yielded, they scored a distinct point in the game they were playing. But if Russia did not yield, and even if she dragged in one or both of the Western Powers, and the expected Armageddon of the nations actually broke out, the time seemed more favourable—from the German point of view—than it was likely to be again.

What Germany and Austria-Hungary aimed at in the first instance was a repetition of the ' shining armour ' episode of 1909. If we may believe the writer of the extract just quoted, something of the same kind had happened again, more recently, behind the scenes. He tells us that at the beginning of 1913 Russia ' showed signs ' (*machte Miene*) of invading Turkish Armenia in the interest of the Balkan Allies, but was stopped by a strong hint from Berlin.[1] If this was so, Russia had already undergone two rebuffs at the hand of the Germanic

[1] op. cit., p. 10.

Alliance. It would, therefore, be doubtful whether her patience would carry her over a third.

And yet the more recent course of events in Turkey goes to prove that both the Allies were equally interested and equally in earnest in the ultimatum to Serbia. This was rather obscured at first by the ambiguities in the general situation. At first it seemed as though Austrian interests alone were directly involved, and Germany only came in as the ally of Austria. But now we can see that Germany also was involved through its stake in Turkey. There were really three distinct motives at work in the Austrian ultimatum to Serbia : (*a*) the motive of revenge or punishment for the Serajevo assassinations ; (*b*) the desire for the humiliation and practical subjugation of Serbia as a part of Austria-Hungary's Balkan policy ; and (*c*) Germany's wider aim in connexion with this policy of gradually extending her power over the whole of the Ottoman Empire. The revelations of Signor Giolitti, in the Italian Parliament on December 5, 1914, have shown that the first of these motives counted for less than was supposed. They have shown that the humiliation of Serbia had been resolved upon months before the assassination of the Archduke, and that it was to be brought about by an ultimatum couched in very similar terms to that which was actually sent.

These considerations are sufficient to prove the solidarity of the two Teutonic Powers. And although Germany assumed a certain independence, and indeed criticized the Austrian Note with some freedom,[1] the White Book confesses that the two Powers were acting together.

> With all our heart we were able to agree with our ally's estimate of the situation, and assure him that

[1] *British Book*, No. 18.

> any action considered necessary to end the movement in Serbia directed against the conservation of the monarchy would meet with our approval.[1]

I have said that a pacific solution of the crisis seemed possible ; but the probabilities were against it. If the Teutonic Allies had been bent upon war, their actions could hardly have tended more steadily in that direction. The dramatic suddenness and seemingly calculated surprise with which the crisis fell upon Europe ; the extreme severity of the demands on Serbia, with a strict time-limit attached to them ; the haughty rejection of Serbia's submissive reply ; the claim to ' localize ' the conflict, which acted chiefly as a bar to effective mediation ; the prompt declaration of war upon Serbia and the invasion of Serbian territory, presenting Europe with an accomplished fact before the negotiations had well begun ; all these were serious obstacles to the preservation of peace. The language of Germany was pacific, but its actions were evasive. Ostensibly, German influence was being exerted at Vienna in support of the other Powers ; but really, its efforts in this direction can only have been lukewarm, because they produced no apparent effect. Every one knew that it rested with Germany to speak the decisive word ; and that word was not spoken. When the decisive step was taken, in the double ultimatum to France and Russia on July 31, it came indeed from Germany, but not in the sense of peace.

It is not necessary to accuse Germany of deliberate double-dealing. When once the Austrian Note to Serbia had been dispatched in the form and under the conditions that it was, all the rest seemed to follow by inevitable sequence. The German Ministers might simply lean back in their chairs and watch the course of events. They

[1] *German White Book*, p. 4.

could keep up friendly language all round. They doubtless commended mildly the peace proposals that came to them at Vienna. It may be fairly said that the better turn which the conversations between Austria and Russia took on July 31 was in part the result of that commendation. But we know that in fact that improvement in the situation came too late. It was on the very same day that the German ultimatums were issued.

2. On all points but one the action of Russia was marked by great patience and moderation. It was by Russia's advice that the Serbian answer to Austria assumed the conciliatory form it did. Although in reply to the Austrian invasion of Serbia Russia also mobilized her southern provinces, care was taken to make it clear that Russia would be willing to suspend her preparations and to adopt a waiting attitude if it was once admitted that the Serbian question concerned the whole of Europe, and negotiations were begun on that basis.[1] These conditions were accepted by Austria, and a satisfactory understanding between the two Powers on the whole subject was reached on July 30.

> Russian military preparations, explained M. Schébéko, only aimed at replying to those of Austria, and at marking the intention and the rights of the Tsar to express his view in the settlement of the Serbian question. Count Berchtold replied that the mobilization steps taken in Galicia also implied no aggressive intentions, and only aimed at maintaining the situation on the same footing. On both sides steps will be taken that these measures shall not be interpreted as signs of hostilities.[2]

By this time the issue between the two Powers had been narrowed down to the finest point possible, viz. the question how Serbia could give complete satisfaction to Austria

[1] *Russian Book*, Nos. 60, 67.

[2] *French Book*, No. 104.

without compromising its own sovereignty and independence.[1]

The German Government was less tractable. For it the question of mobilization was of primary importance ; and it was on this rock that the negotiations split. Military considerations were paramount ; and it became clear that Germany's desire for peace was less strong than her determination to gain the full advantage of her preparedness for war. We cannot help asking if what was possible for Austria-Hungary was not also possible for Germany. If Austria-Hungary had come to terms with Russia about military measures, could not Germany have done the same ? But, no ! The abruptness of the German ultimatums is an important part of the case against her.

In spite of the real advance which had been made in finding terms acceptable to both the leading parties, it is not certain that peace could have been maintained, and —even if it was maintained for some time longer—that it could have been permanently secured. Between the Teutonic Powers and Russia there was a real and serious conflict of interests in the Balkan Peninsula. It is almost surprising—and a proof of Russia's genuine desire for peace—that she should have gone so far to meet her opponents as she did. It would not rob her of the credit for this, even if it were admitted that in her case the desire for peace was partly due to the sense of military weakness. Russia was certainly not ready for war in the sense that Germany was. The first thing that Russia was bent on doing was the construction of strategic railways ; and the course of the war has shown how urgently these were needed. Germany has reaped the fullest advantage from her superiority in this respect. Russia had begun the re-

[1] op. cit., Nos. 112, 113.

organization of her army, but the full effect of it would not be felt until 1916. In France also the Three Years' Service Law had not yet had time to tell. And both in Russia and in France the supply of munitions and equipment was in arrears.

I see that Count Reventlow has recently been contending that Germany was relatively in a better position both in 1905 and in 1908. I greatly doubt whether this can be made good. The position in 1905 was really quite different. At that time the Balkan problem was latent and not in the forefront of the situation. There was in fact no definite issue for Germany to go to war upon. Besides at that time she was not yet a first-rate sea power. In 1908 she gained her ends without fighting ; and it should also be remembered that that was the Dreadnought period.

I fully believe that, from the German point of view, the moment for the 'letting out of strife' was well chosen. Or, the case should perhaps be put in some such way as this : while Germany was quite willing to obtain her ends peacefully and was even prepared to sacrifice something for the sake of peace, military considerations made her less averse than any other of the Powers from the alternative of war. Her attitude was : If it is to be, let it be ; better now than later. Such are the dangers of keeping one's sword so sharp ! But I am afraid we must sadly admit that an ultimate appeal to the sword would have been very hard to avoid.

3. All this time Sir Edward Grey had been labouring earnestly in the cause of peace. The more outlying Powers, France and Italy, had rallied to him as representing the Concert of Europe ; and Russia also was in friendly touch and willing to follow his lead. Nor was Germany backward in professions of friendliness. I believe that these professions were sincere. I cannot pretend

to any special information, and can only judge as one of the outside public. But we shall see later (p. 96 *inf.*) that there is reason to think that for some time negotiations had been going on, and progressing favourably, between London and Berlin ; and there is evidence of a distinct *détente*, or relaxation of strain, in the relations between the two countries during the period 1912–14. This would account for the emotion of genuine surprise and shock in the German Chancellor when he found the two nations on the brink of war. That was not feigned. Nor was it feigned when the German White Book (p. 11) speaks of working ' shoulder to shoulder ' with England. And yet no Power did more than Germany to frustrate the efforts of the British Minister ; first, by the untenable plea that the Note to Serbia was only a local matter in which Europe was not concerned—Germany herself knew better than this (White Book, p. 4)—and then, by the objections raised on the question of procedure. It might almost seem as if the German Foreign Office did not appreciate the extreme urgency of the situation. Owing to that fatal time-limit at the outset, the march of events was dangerously rapid. Details that a leisurely diplomacy might well have discussed, were allowed to weaken and delay the joint action until the time for it had passed. I do not say that this proves that Germany wanted war ; but I am afraid that, if Germany had wanted war, she could not have taken a course that was more likely to bring it about.

The attempts that have been made since the war began to make Great Britain responsible for the failure of the negotiations are so utterly without foundation that it is difficult to believe in their good faith. And the attempt to represent Great Britain as intervening in the quarrel between Teuton and Slav is not less wide of the mark.

So far as Great Britain was concerned it had been made perfectly clear from the first that the question between Austria-Hungary and Serbia was no affair of ours. The official introduction to the Blue Book lays this down expressly.

> Great Britain had no interests in the Balkans, except one. She desired the consolidation and progressive government of the Balkan States. . . . The dispute between Austria and Servia did not necessarily affect that interest; it was a dispute between two Governments with which Great Britain had nothing to do. Sir E. Grey, therefore, consistently stated that he had no concern in that dispute; that he had no title to intervene between Austria and Servia; that he would express no opinion on the merits of the ultimatum. But there was the other side. If the dispute affected the interests of Russia, then the peace of Europe was at stake; and from the first, Sir E. Grey told the Austrian Government that he did not see how Russia, interested as she was in Servia, could take any but a most serious view of such a formidable document as the ultimatum.

If Sir Edward Grey, on behalf of Great Britain, intervened, it was purely as a peacemaker. This attitude had been consistently maintained all through the Balkan troubles. In his speech in the House of Commons on August 3, Sir Edward Grey referred to conversations that he had with the Russian Minister M. Isvolsky as far back as the year 1908:

> I told him definitely then, [that] this being a Balkan crisis, a Balkan affair, I did not consider that public opinion in this country would justify us in promising to give anything more than diplomatic support. More was never asked from us, more was never given, and more was never promised.

A British Minister, knowing the mind of the people, could not do otherwise.

It was only when the field of interest began to travel

towards the West that the question of British intervention became more serious. It is true that the statement of the causes, as distinct from the occasion of the war, has suffered from the prominence given to the breach of the neutrality of Belgium. Here was a quite definite concrete fact, which could be treated directly with Aye or No. The British Government naturally elected to take its stand upon this. The country had given its word ; and its word must be kept. The decision, I fully believe, was right, both on the ground of international law and of practical politics. But, at the same time, to state it quite absolutely in this way is to ignore some limitations to which guarantees of this kind are subject ; and it is also to ignore other considerations of policy which really came in with no less weight than the neutrality of Belgium.

If Germany had announced beforehand that she withdrew from the guarantee, she would have been well within her rights, and not only Belgium but England and France would have known what to expect. But to make no such announcement, and yet to act as if it had been made, was nothing less than a breach of faith and obligation. And when to this is added that not only in 1911 but again in 1913 and even so lately as July 31, 1914, positive assurances were given that Belgian neutrality would be respected,[1] when four days later it was broken, the act became treacherous in the extreme. I cannot see what defence or excuse there can be for this wanton aggravation.

No doubt Germany found it inconvenient to keep her word, and no doubt she gained a great military advantage by not doing so. It was just this advantage which the original agreement by which Belgium was made neutral

[1] *Belgian Book*, No. 12.

was intended to prevent. It was in the interest of the peace of Europe that it should be difficult for the two great Powers to the east and south-west of Belgium to attack each other, and it was by an act of self-denial that Prussia and France agreed to tie their own hands in this way. But Prussia had ceased to be in the mood for acts of self-denial, and Belgian neutrality was forced by no other right than the right of the stronger.

The German invasion was in clear collision with international law. Great Britain considered herself bound by that law, and upon it she took her stand. But her prior interest, and her still greater interest at the moment, was in France. It was known that the German plans involved as a first step the 'crushing' of France. And, however much it might be explained that this crushing was only to be taken in a military sense, England was bound to do her best to prevent it. It was in her interest to do this, because she knew that, after France had been disposed of, her own turn would come next. But the danger to France was near and pressing, and this was, rightly, the predominant motive with the British Government. In that fact lay the clue to the part taken by Great Britain in the momentous negotiations of those few days at the end of July and at the beginning of August.

The position of the British Government and of the British nation was exceedingly difficult—really more so than that of any other of the Powers concerned. The crisis had come like a bolt from the blue ; but for Germany and Austria-Hungary the time was of their own choosing, and their plans were all quite matured. This could not be said of either France or Russia, but the German preoccupation was so constant with both those nations that they were always more or less prepared. Only to

Great Britain did the question come as at once relatively new and full of ambiguities. She was bound to France and Russia by an ' entente ' ; but what was an ' entente ' ? Precisely how much did it carry ? It was certainly something short of an alliance, but how much short of it ? Was it well that it should be carried forward into an alliance, or not ? And, by whatever name it was called, what effect was to be given to it in practice ? These were intricate questions which the nation had to decide for itself in the course of a few hours. I cannot on the spur of the moment think of any crisis in history where so much hung upon a national decision, and where a national decision was made in circumstances of greater difficulty.

For my own part, I thank God that the decision fell out as it did, though it brought with it the terrible calamity of a gigantic war, though it meant the rupture of many old ties, and the forming of many new ones. It was the only straight and honest and clear decision. I can thank God for the behaviour of all our leading public men in the crisis. It was a patriotic act of great value when the leaders of the Opposition sent their note to the Prime Minister on that eventful Sunday. It was an act of splendid magnanimity when the Irish leader declared himself as he did in the House of Commons. The Government never swerved from the straight course, though the responsibility was almost overwhelming. Both the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister rose to the full height of the occasion, and spoke as British statesmen ought to speak under such conditions.

Only one expression escaped which I cannot help, for my own part, rather regretting. I am sorry that the Prime Minister, perhaps in the heat of the moment, characterized the proposals made to the British Ambassador

at Berlin on July 29 as 'infamous proposals'. The phrase was taken up by the Press, and there is some danger that it may pass into history. For this reason it may be well to examine the matter a little more closely.

Let me try to make myself clear. If it is not presumptuous to say so, I entirely approve of the decision. I am glad, and have no hesitation in my gladness, that the proposals were rejected. I could even go so far as to say that, in the turn which the conversation took, it would have been disgraceful to accept them. If it could have been said that, behind the back of France and Belgium, Great Britain bartered away the colonies of the one and the neutrality of the other, that would have been a deep dishonour. But it is rather another thing to describe the proposals in themselves as 'infamous'. It should be remembered that they were made in the form of a conversation, which by the nature of the case could not help being very tentative. As a matter of fact they never got beyond this highly tentative stage. I have often put the question to myself thus: Suppose Germany had definitely offered us two things: (1) not to attack the French coast, and (2) to respect the neutrality of Belgium, would it have been right for us to stand out? I myself think not, but the case would at least have been thoroughly arguable. On the basis of friendship, should we not have done enough for friendship? If such an arrangement had been concluded, it would have been the gift to Belgium of all that she asked for. It would have been like the gift to France of a fleet and several army corps—perhaps the equivalent of our whole expeditionary force. Germany never got to the point of considering whether she could afford to relinquish the march through Belgium. Of course she had no right to ask for any return for this.

It was only keeping her own pledged word. The difference was that between fair warfare and unfair. The Germans must in any case carry on their conscience the deliberate choice of the latter. But, waiving that point, the question remains whether it would have been worth their while to offer, and worth our while to accept, those two restrictions on their freedom of movement as the price of our neutrality. Militarily, for them, I suppose the problem would have been whether they could sufficiently trust to the power of their big guns—a secret advantage which they had and we did not know that they had—to break through the chain of forts on the French frontier. Morally, we should have been within our rights and within the terms of any promise that we had made to France. Still, we should never have been satisfied that we had done all that we ought. If in the end France had been crushed, Europe would have cried shame upon us, and we should have cried shame upon ourselves. As it was, we chose the better part, whatever the cost may be.

4. The first clear overt act of war, in the western theatre, was the violation of the territory of Luxemburg on August 2. This was followed by the crossing of the Belgian frontier on August 4. On the German side, there are some allegations of trivial and technical breaches of neutrality which may be left for specialists to examine when the war is over. But a more substantial charge, if it holds good at all, is that which is based on the discovery at Brussels of certain documents which go to show that as far back as 1906 British and Belgian military authorities compared notes and drew up some provisional plans as to the steps to be taken in case at any time Germany violated the neutrality of Belgium. I have little doubt that the archives of most States

contain many documents of this kind, though it does not often happen that an enemy gets possession of them. And I have equally little doubt that they are perfectly legitimate. The imposing of an obligation by international law implies the rightfulness of the means, not being in themselves illegal, required in order to carry out that obligation. It would be absurd to suppose that international law compelled the parties to a guarantee to take no steps with a view to the maintenance of that guarantee until it was actually threatened or broken. The whole transaction was purely hypothetical. Until the contemplated emergency arose, plans relating to it had no more value than so much blank paper. They hurt nobody, and bound nobody. The Germans have certainly not shown themselves so scrupulous in such matters that they can rightly take offence if other States considered beforehand the contingency that they might on any particular point prove less scrupulous than they were bound to be.

To the same category would belong other minor accusations, such as the alleged finding of British ammunition at Maubeuge, the alleged use of dum-dum bullets, alleged infractions of the neutrality of Belgium. It has been authoritatively stated that, if British ammunition was found in Maubeuge, it had been placed there since the outbreak of the war. The same charge of using dum-dum bullets is brought against the Germans by one of the Belgian Commissions, and is probably just as true (or untrue) in the one case as in the other. There is always this simple answer, that it would not be worth while for a combatant to risk his good name for any such advantage as dum-dum bullets could give. But in such a matter mistakes may easily arise, and on the British side explanations have been given. The Belgian

Government has also explicitly denied the allegations made against it. Technical charges of this kind are bandied about at the beginning of most wars, but nations do not go to war on such issues.

II. *More Remote Antecedents.* So far we have been considering the course of European history and diplomacy for a space of less than two months. But although the events which led to the war culminated in this period, it is impossible to isolate it from what had gone before. The relations of the leading States of Europe to each other were not quite normal. There was a general feeling of nervousness and tension which might mean more or might mean less. It was as if there was a guest in the drawing-room who was not aware that his voice was rather loud and sometimes rather harsh, and the other guests were speculating whether after all it might not be only manner and his bark really worse than his bite. Germany—and to some extent Austria-Hungary as well—had let it be seen that she was restless and dissatisfied, and keeping a keen look out for possible openings and opportunities. I am not considering now what amount of justification there was for this attitude. There was a great deal, if not exactly of justification, yet of excuse for it. I hope to come back to that point later, but for the present I am only noting its existence as a matter of fact.

1. Europe had been startled by a succession of crises, all rather sudden and dramatic, in keeping with the character of the leading actor in them. First there was the demonstration at Tangier in 1905, followed by the agitation which led to the fall of M. Delcassé. Then there was the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1908, with the ' shining armour ' episode in 1909. After

that came the famous *coup d'Agadir* in 1911, and the acute tension of that year, which seemed to be relaxed by the agreement between France and Germany published on November 4. By this agreement Germany received substantial compensation in the Cameroons and in the French Congo. But although these concessions were accepted by the German Government, there was still considerable soreness in public opinion.

It may be well to take up the thread of the narrative at this point ; and I do not think that I can do better than trace its course as it is presented to us in the *French Yellow Book*. The earliest document quoted in this is a Report by the French Military Attaché at Berlin in 1912.

> We discover every day how deep and how lasting are the sentiments of wounded pride and of rancour against us, provoked by the events of last year. The treaty of November 4, 1911, is a profound disappointment.
>
> The resentment felt in every part of the country is the same. All Germans, even the Socialists, resent our having taken their share in Morocco.
>
> It appeared, one or two years ago, as if the Germans were set out to conquer the world. They deemed themselves so strong that they thought no one would dare to enter the lists against them. Boundless possibilities were opened up for German industry, German trade, and German expansion.
>
> Naturally those ideas and those ambitions have not disappeared to-day. Germans still require outlets for their commerce, and they still desire economic and colonial expansion. This they consider as their right, as they are growing every day, and the future belongs to them. They look upon us, with our 40,000,000 inhabitants, as a secondary nation.
>
> In the crisis of 1911 this secondary nation held its own against them. The Emperor and the Government yielded ; public opinion has neither forgiven them nor us. Public opinion does not intend that such a thing shall occur again.

This Report is quoted and endorsed by the writer's successor in the following year.[1] And there is a further Report to similar effect from the Naval Attaché.

Next in order comes the text of a confidential memorandum of which the French Ministry of War had succeeded in getting possession. It is dated 'Berlin, March 19, 1913'; and it is evidently drawn up by some one high in authority, sketching out the procedure to be followed with reference to the new Bills for the strengthening of the German army. It has an important bearing on the methods of German procedure generally. It is only from this last point of view that I make one or two extracts from it.

> Our new Army law is but an extension of the military education of the German people. Our ancestors of 1813 made greater sacrifices. It is our sacred duty to sharpen the sword which has been placed in our hand, and to hold it ready for our defence as well as to strike our enemy. The idea that our armaments are a reply to the armaments and policy of the French must be instilled into the people. The people must be accustomed to think that an offensive war on our part is a necessity if we are to combat the adversary's provocations. We must act with prudence in order to arouse no suspicion, and so as to avoid the crises which might damage our economic life. Things must be so managed that under the weighty impression of powerful armaments, of considerable sacrifices, and of political tension, an outbreak (*Losschlagen*) shall be considered as a deliverance, because after it would come decades of peace and of prosperity, such as those which followed 1870.
>
> There need be no worry about the fate of our colonies. The final result in Europe will settle that for them. On the other hand, disturbances must be stirred up in Northern Africa and in Russia. This is a means of absorbing forces of the adversary. It is, therefore, vitally necessary that through well-chosen agents we

[1] *French Book*, No. 1, Annexe 1.

should get into contact with influential people in Egypt, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco, in order to prepare the necessary measures in case of European war. These secret allies would, of course, be recognized openly in time of war, and on the conclusion of peace they would be guaranteed the preservation of the advantages they had won. These desiderata can be realized. . . . Risings in time of war created by political agents require careful preparation by material means. They must break out simultaneously with the destruction of the means of communication. They should have a guiding head who might be found among influential religious or political chiefs. The Egyptian school is specially suited for this. More and more it gathers together the intellectuals of the Mussulman world. By whatever means we must be strong, so that by a powerful effort we may destroy our enemies in the east and in the west. But in the next European war the small states must be forced to follow us or must be cowed.

It is remarkable that the German Theologians (in their Second Address) call special attention to the British and Belgian espionage. One would have thought that they must be aware that the spy-system of their own country was carried to far greater lengths than ours. But the passage just quoted will show that the German system by no means stops short at espionage ; it extends to intrigues of a still more questionable character. And these, like all the other German preparations for war, are carried out with the usual thoroughness.

The evidence just given holds good for the traditions and methods of the German bureaucratic service generally. For an opinion at the end of the paper the writer alone is responsible ; but it is rather significant that such an opinion should be embodied in an important state paper.

The aroused eagle will take its flight and, seizing the enemy in its sharpened claws, render him harmless. We shall then remember that the provinces of the old German empire, the county of Burgundy and a large

portion of Lorraine, are still in the hands of the Franks, that thousands of our German brothers of the Baltic Provinces groan under the yoke of the Slav. It is a national matter to give back to Germany what she formerly possessed.[1]

Another significant passage is contained in the next dispatch from M. Jules Cambon, dated May 6, 1913 :

> The decision which brought about this preparatory step to mobilization is in accordance with the ideas of the Grand General Staff. On this point I have been informed of the remark made in German circles by General von Moltke, who is considered here to be the most distinguished officer in the German army. The idea of the General Staff is to act by surprise. ' The commonplaces as to the responsibility of the aggressor ', said General von Moltke, ' must be disregarded. When war has become necessary it must be waged by ranging all the chances on one's own side. Success alone justifies it. Germany cannot and must not give Russia time to mobilize, or she will be obliged to maintain on the eastern frontier a force which would leave her in a position of equality, if not of inferiority, in front of France. Therefore, we must forestall our principal adversary immediately there are nine chances in ten that we are going to have war, and we must begin war without waiting, in order brutally to crush all resistance.' This is exactly the state of mind in military circles. It corresponds to the state of mind in political circles, where Russia is not, as is France, necessarily regarded as an enemy.[2]

But of all the documents in the French Book, the two last to which I will refer (Nos. 5 and 6) are the most illuminating. The first of these, a ' Report on German public opinion according to Diplomatic and Consular Agents ', is put together by a master hand. Equal credit is reflected upon all who had a share in it. It is a diagnosis of national opinion which is as subtle and delicate in detail as it is broad and comprehensive in outline. It

[1] op. cit., No. 2, Annexe II.

[2] op. cit., No. 3.

is too long to quote, and it must be read and studied in its entirety. But one paragraph is indispensable, as it bears upon a point which the ordinary apologists for Germany pass over very lightly, if they do not ignore it altogether, the definite existence and activity of an influential party making for war.

> One sometimes speaks of the German military party. The expression is inexact even to say that Germany is the country of the supremacy of military power, as France is said to be the country of the supremacy of civil power. There is a state of mind more worthy of attention than this historic fact because it forms a danger more evident and more near. There is a war party with its chiefs, its troops, a Press either convinced or paid to form opinion, and various and redoubtable means of intimidating the Government. It works upon the country with clear ideas, ardent feeling, and with tense and active will. The partisans of war are split up in several categories. Each draws from its caste, its class, its interests and moral and intellectual formation, its feelings of revenge, special reasons which unite to make a general state of mind and increase the strength and rapidity of the warlike current.[1]

The last document is even more important still. It takes us back behind the scenes, to 'the very pulse of the machine'; and it proceeds from the highest quarter, M. Jules Cambon, the French Ambassador at Berlin.

> I have received from an absolutely sure source a record of a conversation which is reported between the Emperor and the King of the Belgians, in the presence of the Chief of the General Staff, General von Moltke, a fortnight ago—a conversation which would appear greatly to have struck King Albert. I am in no way surprised by the impression created, which corresponds with that made on me some time ago. Hostility against us is becoming more marked, and the Emperor has ceased to be a partisan of peace. The German Emperor's interlocutor thought up to the present, as

[1] op. cit., No. 5.

did everybody, that William the Second, whose personal influence has been exerted in many critical circumstances in favour of the maintenance of peace, was still in the same state of mind. This time, it appears, he found him completely changed. The German Emperor is no longer in his eyes the champion of peace, against the bellicose tendencies of certain German parties. William II has been brought to think that war with France is inevitable, and that it will have to come to it one day or the other. The Emperor, it need hardly be said, believes in the crushing superiority of the German army and in its assured success.

General von Moltke spoke in exactly the same sense as his sovereign. He also declared that war was necessary and inevitable, but he showed himself still more certain of success. ' For ', said he to the King, ' this time we must put an end to it ' (*cette fois il faut en finir*), ' and your Majesty can hardly doubt the irresistible enthusiasm which on that day will carry away the whole German people.'

The King of the Belgians protested that to interpret the intentions of the French Government in this manner was to travesty them, and to allow oneself to be misled as to the feelings of the French nation by the manifestation of a few hotheads, or of conscienceless intriguers. The Emperor and his Chief of General Staff none the less persisted in their point of view.

During this conversation the Emperor, moreover, appeared overwrought and irritable. As the years begin to weigh upon William II the family traditions, the retrograde feelings of the court, and, above all, the impatience of soldiers, are gaining more ascendancy over his mind. Perhaps he may feel I know not what kind of jealousy of the popularity acquired by his son, who flatters the passions of the Pan-Germans, and perhaps he may find that the position of the Empire in the world is not commensurate with its power. . . . Further, the Emperor William is less master of his impatience than is generally believed. More than once I have seen him allow his innermost thoughts to escape. Whatever may have been the object of his conversation, which has been reported to me, the confidence has none the less the gravest character. It corresponds with the precariousness of the general situation, and

with the state of a certain portion of opinion in France and in Germany.[1]

The writer is evidently telling the plain truth. He is not under the least temptation to set down aught in malice. He bears handsome testimony to the Kaiser's love of peace and to the prolonged efforts that he had made to maintain it. But it is also made clear that at last he had succumbed. I think we can read between the lines. Many influences the Kaiser would be able to resist, but not that of settled unpopularity, the strain of a real antagonism between himself and his people. He must be the real leader. If there was to be war, he must be the real war-lord. And, unfortunately, in gauging the feelings and wishes of the people his own more immediate surroundings would count disproportionately. He saw his people themselves partly through a medium.

2. The historian of the future will have to chronicle the fact that, at the outbreak of the war, there was diffused throughout Germany an extraordinary hatred of this country. This time, it may be right to speak of a 'hatred of England'; because, although the Germans probably do not distinguish between English and Scotch, and although in this matter the two peoples are quite as one, many Germans would in fact make an express exception in favour of Ireland. They regard the Irish as possible allies, or at least a thorn in the side of the other nationalities.

It is happily unnecessary for me to prove the existence of this hatred. We hardly take up a newspaper without some indication of it, greater or less. The last thing that I should wish to do would be to inflame the passions of my own countrymen. Those who care to see specimens

[1] op. cit., No. 6.

will find a choice anthology in the chapter headed 'The German Press' of a book by an American writer entitled *Can Germany Win?* or in two other American works, James M. Beck, *The Evidence in the Case*, and J. William White, *America's Arraignment of Germany*, and one British, W. H. Dawson, *What is Wrong with Germany?* On this subject at least the Germans themselves have left us in no doubt either by speech or act. We shall rather wish, so far as we can, to remember the exceptions (and I need not say that there have been many individual exceptions) than to prove the rule.

The treatment of this subject that I shall aim at will be: (*a*) to offer some mitigating considerations, (*b*) to trace historically the process by which the hatred has gradually grown, and (*c*) to sketch as well as I can the underlying doctrine or philosophy which has also grown up along with it. I shall not attempt to treat all these subjects exhaustively here, as some of them will come up again in other connexions—more especially as parts of the German case against us.

(*a*) I must be upon my guard, as I have already said, in making what may seem to be sweeping generalizations. I have not before me any book of confessions representing the inner thoughts of different individuals and classes in this nation. I must trust to a few casual conversations, which are by no means those of Diogenes with his lamp, or indeed of one who is at the best of times a very gregarious person. In part one has to project one's own feelings, or to guess at the feelings of others by one's own. At the same time I am tempted to put some little trust in these impressions, because I may say that all my life long I have had no greater subject of interest than to study the temper of this country of mine in its charac-

teristic and successive moods and emotions. After all, there is in each individual of a race something instinctive and innate which really belongs not so much to him as an individual as to the common stock from which he is sprung. It is in his blood, and in the air around him.

With this caution, then, I will venture to state my own belief—to be taken for what it is worth—that the German hatred of this country has not been, and is not even now, reciprocated in anything approaching to the same strength and degree. No doubt there has been a great deal of strong language, varying in intensity according to the feeling and self-control, or want of self-control, of the persons using it. This strong language has been directed against several aspects of ' Germany ' as an abstraction, or against the ' Kaiser ' as representing the same abstraction. There is a division of opinion in this country, one section of which is more severe upon the Kaiser personally than the other. I will not say that it is very discriminating or very penetrating ; but it is quite honest, and judges according to its lights. Neither would I say that the denunciations addressed to the abstract Germany are always very discriminating or penetrating. They are mostly directed against what is called ' Prussian militarism '. This again is very honest—all the more honest because it is just in this matter of ' militarism ' that the German ideal and our own is most diametrically opposed. It is not to be expected that, in a broad popular judgement of this kind, there should be any full understanding either of the historical conditions under which the militarist ideal arose or of the amount of argument that may be urged in favour of it at the present time.

But this I will say for my people, that all along they have distinguished, and been very careful to distinguish,

between that side or aspect of Germany which we are fighting and the German people in its essence and as a whole. The British nation thinks that there is something wrong, and very wrong, with Germany ; and it may be a good deal baffled and perplexed in its attempts to make out exactly what is wrong. But its condemnations have never been sweeping and without reserve. And it has always been acutely conscious that, whoever may be guilty, there are thousands upon thousands of good peace-loving Germans who—apart from their consent (which is deliberate) in the policy of their nation—are wholly innocent.

The strong language of which I have spoken has no doubt gone far to obscure the fact ; but in spite of it I must affirm—and affirm with great and confident emphasis—that Great Britain went into this war without animosity. I never was so proud—I never thought to be so proud—of my own nation as I was in the first week of the war. Everything about it seemed to me noble. Its statesmen were noble ; its Parliament was noble ; its fighting services were noble ; its Press was noble ; its people were noble. It should not be forgotten that the conditions under which the national decision had to be made were of extreme difficulty. It had to be made in hours rather than days ; and the issues were tremendous. But it decided right ; and it decided right deliberately and without passion. There was one significant incident which marked the temper in which it decided. I do not know how often I saw quoted in the course of that week the great words of Abraham Lincoln :

> With malice toward none ; with charity for all ; with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right—let us strive on to finish the work we are in.

It was really the motto which every one had in his

mind. The war was a stern necessity—not to be avoided, but to be waged calmly and without hate.

I know perfectly well that Germany, too, felt in an heroic mood. I know that it girded up its loins for an heroic struggle. It may be a question which was the more imposing—the regular mustering of the trained bands of a mighty military empire with its warlike traditions behind it, or the free spontaneous flocking to the colours of a democratic people, with much less in the way of tradition, but with the impulse of a repressed but glowing patriotism. I certainly will not belittle either. There was this difference that, whereas the sons of Britain were responding simply to the call of duty, the German hosts and the German nation were animated in addition by vague and vast hopes of gain—I quite admit, not merely material, but in some sense ideal and spiritual as well.

This was the double spectacle at the outbreak of the war ; and so far as I can judge it has not greatly altered since. The Germans are never weary of denouncing everything that appears in the British Press as ' lies '. It is true that, just at the beginning of things, when all the nations engaged in the war were embarking upon a comparatively new experience for which they were ill prepared, the Press of all the belligerents was thrown out of gear and many wild rumours were admitted with insufficient criticism. But that state of things did not last long. I believe that our own Press has done its best to tell the truth ; and in this respect, allowing for the responsibilities of the state of war, I am not prepared to bring a railing accusation against our enemies. So far as our own Press is concerned, I believe that there has been not only an honest endeavour to tell the truth, but an honest endeavour to do justice to those who are ranged against us. I have constantly seen unstinted tributes to the wonderful

courage and self-devotion of the soldiers and sailors and to the resolute facing of sacrifices by the civilians. If more can be said, I am sure that our papers will willingly say it. Any act of chivalry and generosity on the other side is carefully, and I think I may say gladly, noticed. The same, I believe, holds good of the army in the field and of the navy at sea. Those who have come back from the front speak with all respect of the German as a fighting man ; and I have no reason to think that this respect has diminished as the war has gone on. And every daring feat of the German navy has been as warmly praised in this country as in Germany itself. There has been abundant readiness to speak quite impartially of kindness and considerateness shown to wounded and prisoners. There is no doubt rather a long black list of examples on the other side. We have heard too much of British prisoners on their way to internment left for days together without food and insulted by crowds at stations that were actively engaged in caring for their own people. The hatred against us has been expressed by differentiation of treatment extended to our men as compared with French or Belgian or Russian. Our men themselves have noted these things, but have spoken of them quietly, without exaggeration or anger.

Only the other day a party of exchanged wounded and prisoners reported that they had been worse treated in proportion to the distance at which they were from the front. This is only one indication, among many, that the hatred against us has been very largely an artificially fostered thing. It is by no means at its worst in the fighting line, though the feeling that prevails throughout the country naturally finds its way there. Whatever may be the German *animus*, I do not believe that there has been any rancour on our side. We have rather heard many

delightful stories of our own men insisting upon equal treatment for German wounded and prisoners as for themselves : ' We've done our bit for our country, and they've done theirs,' as I heard it put the other day. That is like our men all over. On their side, at least, a good, straight, stand-up fight between German and Briton will leave no malice behind, but only respect for a brave foe.

(*b*) It is desirable to keep apart the historical process by which Germany became more and more hostile to us and the theoretic process by which there has gradually grown up the body of doctrine on which Germany is acting, a body of doctrine which involves a real conflict of ideas and ideals. It must, however, be understood that these two processes naturally run up into each other and that the separation cannot always be maintained. I will speak of the development in practice first.

From the Battle of Waterloo to about the year 1860 the relations between the two peoples were excellent. At that time the Liberal movement in German politics was in the ascendant. And Liberals everywhere looked up to the British Constitution as their model. England was regarded as the home of liberty and progress. But the German Liberals had their chance and failed. They failed to bring about German unity and efficiency of action. Another experiment had to be tried ; and that experiment passed over into the masterful hands of Bismarck. Under his strong and resolute guidance the problem which had vexed the soul of Germany for so long was at last solved. In less than a decade, under the pressure of three successive wars—the Danish War in 1864, the Austrian and Prussian War in 1866, and the Franco-German War in 1870–1, the seeming chaos of the German States was reduced to order, united, and

consolidated, under the leadership of Prussia. At the first step in the process, the war with Denmark, some tension arose between this country and Germany ; and, whatever may have been exactly the right course for the British Government to take, the course which it actually took is not one that we look back upon with satisfaction. There was something to be said for both sides, and if we could have mediated effectually between them, we might have deserved the gratitude of both. But the task was probably at that time beyond us, and if we had interfered we should only have burnt our fingers worse than we did. It cannot be said that we came out with credit ; and we at the same time lost in prestige through the discomfiture of our Liberal friends in Germany. In the Franco-German War our sympathies were at first preponderatingly upon the German side ; but they veered round somewhat as the war went on, and as it seemed to us that the Germans were pressing their advantage too hard. The conclusion of the war and the foundation of the German Empire was a definite triumph for the Bismarckian system. The constitution of the new Empire was drawn up with singular adroitness on principles opposed to our own. And we certainly have no right to claim that, for Germany at least, principles such as ours would have been any improvement upon those that were actually adopted. Really the German Constitution and the British Constitution are, each in its own way, consistent and coherent wholes between which it is necessary to choose ; and it would be too much to claim that as yet experience has pronounced decisively in favour of either. They are really both on their trial ; and the present war will contribute important evidence on either side. We are attached to our own system, and we can see (as we think) flaws—and even great flaws—in its

rival. But they can say precisely the same thing of ours. It is the question between a free democracy on the one hand, and a powerful bureaucracy on the other ; for the German system ends in giving the practical direction of affairs to this. There can be no doubt that in many ways it has shown its great efficiency.

The German system was the creation of Bismarck ; and he remained in power long enough to get it thoroughly into working order. It naturally had its active advocates and apostles, who gave it formulated expression and applied this expression to the practical politics of the time. Foremost among these missionaries was von Treitschke, the historian, who was admirably placed for carrying out the function that fell to him. He was professor in the University of Berlin, where his lectures were largely attended by mixed audiences, from 1874 to 1896, and for a large portion of that time (1871–1884) he was also a member of the Reichstag. In spite of his deafness he had an effective style of eloquence and made a very considerable impression upon his contemporaries. All his powers were devoted to the advocacy of the Prussian ascendancy and to the laying down of a political theory which harmonized with its working. For the moment I must reserve the consideration of this, and must only speak of the application of his theories to history. It is not surprising that in this field he was a bitter antagonist of England. This country was the living embodiment of the system which most directly competed with his own ; and in other ways it came into collision with his ideals. The British Empire, as such, exercised a fascination over him ; but he regarded the British people as decadent and unworthy of it. He expected that it would soon fall from the nerveless hands which held it, and his ambition was that Germany should step into the vacant place.

The chief question about Treitschke is the nature and extent of his influence. German apologists at the present time are rather tending to minimize this. They point to the fact that he founded no school in history. The leading historians of the present have rather gone back behind him to Ranke. There were good reasons for this. Treitschke was thoroughly a party man. He had much in common with our own Macaulay; the style of the two writers was similar; they both had the qualities of vividness, picturesqueness, and rapid movement; and they both made these qualities subservient to the presentation of a one-sided case.

But although Treitschke founded no school in history, it by no means follows that his influence was not great. It must be sought for in another direction; not so much in the scientific as in the popular conception of history. The true succession to Treitschke is to be found in the journalism of the last two decades.[1] The influence of this has made its way downwards to the masses of the people.

It has also made its way into Education. I shall have shortly, when I come to state the German case against us, to give a conspectus of the kind of ideas that are current. I can only call it an Anti-British Legend. No wonder that a nation which is accustomed to such a presentation of British history and British character should be prepared

[1] Cf. Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie*, p. 546: 'Treitschke's influence on German historiography has not been so strong as was perhaps at first believed. *On the nationalistic journalism he did indeed exercise an immense influence.* But the more historic writing turns to sociological and economic problems, so much the less can it utilize his activities that are governed by dogmatic nationalism. He shares the fate of most publicists. His opinions were adapted to a particular moment; they could only develop their full effect upon contemporaries . . . the younger Prussian school has therefore, as against Treitschke, preferred to go back to Ranke.'

to hate us. All the materials were there, piled up like so many barrels of gunpowder. They were only waiting for the application of the spark ; and it is needless to say that the outbreak of the war supplied the spark.

It was no doubt a shock to Germany, when the two nations suddenly found themselves at war. But it was just as much a shock to the rest of Europe and to ourselves. The suddenness aggravated the whole effect, and made what must have been in any case exciting enough doubly exciting. I have partly shown already, and it may be necessary for me to show again, that whoever was responsible for this suddenness, we were not. It was, I believe, one of the disastrous results of the time-limit attached to the Austrian Note to Serbia. When once that was launched, diplomacy never had a chance of catching up with the course of events. Action came first, and reason and discussion had to follow after. The real cause of our entrance into the quarrel was the threat to France, and in connexion with that the violation of Belgium. If Germany had been strongly bent on avoiding these things, she could have done so. But the German people trusted their Government, and accepted implicitly whatever it chose to tell them. I do not know how far they have even yet had a full opportunity of following the course of the negotiations as the Western peoples have. All that they saw was that we had entered into a quarrel which they knew was originally none of ours. It was natural, however mistaken, that they should think that we did so simply to spite them and to pay off an old grudge. We had no grudge against Germany on account of which we should ever have thought of going to war. But it was quite true that we could not trust their intentions ; and, whatever their intentions in regard to ourselves might be, we were not going to see our neighbour's house

burnt down without lending a helping hand to put out the flames.

One of the reasons why the German people were so ready to follow their Government was because they were so confident of success. They really despised all their possible opponents in greater or less degree. And, although they would probably have preferred to deal with two of the Greater Powers at a time rather than with three, they did not shrink from the larger game, as they believed that it would only mean the greater victory and the richer prize.

It seems very much as if it was here that they had made a miscalculation. They have been very near to a complete victory, but it has eluded their grasp. And they doubtless debit us with a substantial share in the miscarriage. But if they do, that is not likely to make them more amiably disposed to us.

(*c*) After all, the hatred which Germany bears to us is a comparatively superficial phenomenon. It is a product of the teaching of Treitschke and others who have followed in his steps. But it is not the most important product of this teaching. I have already spoken of it as an incidental consequence of a whole body of doctrine. And it is this body of doctrine which seems to me to have the most serious significance, both for Germany herself and for the world at large.

Different elements have entered in. I am by no means sure that the first phase of the movement is not to be found in our own writer Carlyle. His *Lectures on Heroes* (1841), *Oliver Cromwell* (1845), and *Frederick the Great* (1858–65), laid stress upon a side of things which in the popular creed of the day was not prominent, the importance of individuality and personality as opposed to general tendencies and economic laws. Carlyle may be held to

have founded in this country the ' cult of the Strong Man '. Carlyle was not a philosopher, but he could paint a picture ; he could, and he did, transfer to paper and express in ink the ' cloudy symbols ' of a vaguely felt ideal. Then came Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859), with its leading ideas of the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. An adaptation of these ideas, on a basis of classical culture and in direct antithesis to Christianity, formed the staple of the teaching of Nietzsche (1834–1900), with whom the Strong Man passed over into the race of ' Supermen '. Like Carlyle, Nietzsche was not really a philosopher and did not produce any coherent and closely articulated system. But he could wield a powerful and incisive pen ; visions of beauty drawn from his classical training passed before him ; and there was a strain of high aspiration in what he wrote which, although he preached in the wilderness during his life, has taken a deeper hold on his countrymen since his death.

In the meantime Bismarck had been making history on a large scale in the 'sixties and 'seventies. And, as we have seen, von Treitschke was engaged in reducing the principles of his work to a political formula. It seems that the germinal idea of his thinking (*Der Staat ist Macht*) is derived from an older writer, A. L. von Rochau, whose *Realpolitik* appeared in 1853.[1] Starting from this conception of the State as the embodiment of Power, Treitschke built up a sort of popular political philosophy which, falling in with other tendencies, has found wide acceptance among the German people.

One of the chief effects of this doctrine has been to draw a sharp distinction between the laws which regulate the conduct of the individual and those which regulate

[1] See H. W. C. Davis, *The Political Thought of Heinrich von Treitschke*, p. 6 n.

the practice of the State. The individual always has above him the State, which gives its sanction to the rules of morals and punishes those who break them. But there is no corresponding higher sanction to bind the State. The State has nothing above itself; it must be the judge in its own cause. And the supreme rule by which it is guided is the law of self-preservation. The plea of 'necessity', which is really nothing more than self-interest, absolves it from obligations which cease to be binding because there is no one to enforce them. As between nations, the only arbitrament is that of war.

In a system like this it is assumed that the units in the state-system are fairly equal. The weak have no rights as against the strong; or rather such rights as they have exist only upon sufferance. The defect of power in any case prevents the weak state from full and free development of its character and mission.

There was no love lost between Nietzsche and Treitschke during their lives. Their political predilections were different. Treitschke was an ardent nationalist; he was a strong German patriot and a great admirer of Prussia. Nietzsche held himself superior to nationalism; he had not a high opinion of Germany, and he aimed rather at being 'a good European citizen'. But both writers were at one in their hatred of England; both were at one in their glorification of war; both were at one in building their whole system on Power; and both were inclined to make light of any rights possessed by the weak as against the strong.

These ideas have found still more thoroughgoing expression in the writings of von Bernhardi. He has combined together the salient points in the teaching both of Nietzsche and of Treitschke, dotting all the i's and crossing the t's, and at the same time giving to them the

definite concrete application which might be expected from a practical soldier. The chief question in regard to von Bernhardi is as to the extent to which his views are to be regarded as symptomatic. He wrote with great and doubtless inconvenient frankness, and it does not surprise us when we are told that he has been placed upon the retired list. Different and conflicting statements have been made as to the circulation of his most important book, *Germany and the Next War*, published in 1911: six thousand copies is the lowest estimate that I have seen, but also eight thousand and ten thousand. My own copy, which is dated 1912, belongs to the 'second and third edition' issued together. In any case this means a rapid and large circulation for such a work.

But, whatever may be the exact truth about this particular writer, there is abundant evidence of the wide diffusion of views very similar to his and often expressed in even more outrageous form. I do not want merely to reproduce passages collected by others, such as those from the tracts of the Pan-Germanic League quoted by Mr. Fletcher in the second of his Oxford pamphlets, or those collected in *America's Arraignment of Germany*, pp. 22–31, or the striking extracts (from Dr. Fuchs, the journalist Max Harden, and Major-General von Disfurth) in Mr. Beck's *Evidence in the Case*, pp. 11–13, or the long and impressive series in the chapter on 'The Emperor and *Weltpolitik*' in Mr. W. H. Dawson's *What is Wrong with Germany?* I must only allow myself two extracts from this last chapter, as embodying the comprehensive testimony of a clear-sighted German witness, Professor Otfried Nippold, in a work published in 1913.

> 'Chauvinism', he says, 'has grown enormously in Germany during the last decade. This fact most impresses those who have returned to Germany after living

for a long time abroad. Many such Germans have expressed to me their surprise at the change which has come over the soul of the nation in recent years, and I myself can say from experience how astonished I was, on returning to Germany after long absence, to see this psychological transformation.'

Another passage quoted later from the same writer is as follows :

Hand in hand with this outspoken hostility to foreign countries are conjoined a one-sided exaltation of war and a war mania such as would have been regarded as impossible a few years ago. One can only confess with regret the fact that to-day there is so much irresponsible agitation against other States and nations, and so much frivolous incitement to war. It cannot be doubted that this agitation is part of a deliberate scheme, the object of which is gradually to win the population, and if possible the Government, by any means whatever—even by the distortion of fact and malicious slander—for the programme of the Chauvinists.

These people not only incite the nation to war, but systematically stimulate the desire for war. War is pictured not as a possibility that may occur, but as a necessity that must come, and the sooner the better. The quintessence of the teaching of the organizations of Chauvinism, like the Pan-Germanic Federation and the German Defence Association, is always the same : a European war is not merely an eventuality for which we must be prepared, but a necessity at which we should, in the interest of the German nation, rejoice.

From this dogma it is only a small step to the next maxim of the Chauvinists, which is so dear to the heart of the belligerent political generals—the maxim of the 'war of attack', or the so-called preventive war. If war has to come, then let it come at the moment most favourable to us. In other words, do not let us wait until a formal cause for war occurs, but let us strike when it best suits us, and above all let us do it soon ! There we have the logic of the Chauvinistic system compressed into few words. From the idea of a defensive war for urgent reasons the Chauvinists have advanced

to the idea of an offensive war for no reason at all, and they flatter themselves that the German nation has undergone the same transformation.[1]

I fear it is difficult to acquit the intellectual and spiritual leaders of Germany of taking this temper far too lightly. It has been working like a leaven in the midst of the people, and they have allowed it to work. Instead of grappling with it at the outset and really probing the premisses on which it rested, they have suffered it to go on unchecked ; until a writer like Professor Nippold finds the mischief done and not easily to be undone.

What wonder if foreign observers, looking on, felt their own countries threatened ? And what wonder if foreign governments felt obliged to take the peaceful professions of Germany with a certain reserve ? They knew too well that Germany was ready to strike and that the choice of the moment for striking rested with her.

[1] op. cit., pp. 142, 149 f.

B. THE GERMAN CASE

I. *German Pamphlets on the War.*—It was not until the month of December 1914 that any considerable amount of the German literature produced by the war began to reach this country. Since that time I have had access to a good many pamphlets and essays in which the German case is stated, many of them signed by very eminent names. Amongst these I may mention in particular a group of distinguished professors who command deep respect in this country: Adolf von Harnack (the theologian), Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (the scholar), Otto von Gierke (the jurist), Wilhelm von Bode (the art critic and expert), Lujo Brentano (the economist), Hermann Diels (the scholar), Houston Stewart Chamberlain—by birth an Englishman, but *ipsis Germanis Germanior*—Rudolf Eucken (the philosopher), Hans von Delbrück, Erich Marcks and Eduard Meyer (the historians), Wilhelm Wundt (the psychologist), Adolf Deissmann, Paul Feine, Julius Kaftan, Friedrich Loofs, Reinhold Seeberg, Ernst Troeltsch (theologians), and a number of others whose names would be less familiar. It is true that many of these papers are slight and touch only limited side aspects of the main question. But a remarkable sameness runs through them all. Professor Wundt's pamphlet, which has been translated in the Oxford series, may be taken as a rather favourable example than otherwise.

It is melancholy and monotonous reading. One after another the writers tell us that we are the best hated of all Germany's enemies. They can understand Belgium

being hostile, and France and Russia. They can understand, and up to a certain point forgive ; but we entered into the war from sheer malice, because we wanted to destroy Germany ; and therefore we are not to be forgiven. It is we who really caused the war. In a sense Russia may have been the more immediate cause ; but it was our machinations and our encouragement which set the others to work. We did it out of jealousy and meanness of spirit. We were jealous of Germany's brilliant success in commerce. We were already overtaken in many of its branches, and we saw that we should soon be overtaken and surpassed in more. We therefore determined to destroy our chief competitor by surrounding him with a circle of enemies. The arch conspirator was King Edward VII. It was he who invented and began to put in practice this diabolical scheme. His mantle descended upon Sir Edward Grey, who has at last succeeded in bringing about its complete realization. It is nothing to our credit that we are no longer bent on enlarging our own possessions. We are like a burglar retired from business. We are gorged with spoil. We have already coloured red a fifth of the earth's surface. Our empire is the product of force and fraud—of fraud even more than of force ; for, although we have done a certain amount of fighting on our own account, we have shown a singular skill in getting other people to fight our battles, especially Germans. We have been quite unscrupulous ourselves. We usually contrived to steal our prey while no one was looking. But now that Germany has awoke from her slumbers and is also beginning to look about her and to add to her modest collection of colonies, we invariably put ourselves in the way, or rather, as of old, get some one else to do so. Until at last, having succeeded in embroiling Germany with Russia and France at the same time, we

see that the great opportunity is come and are throwing our own sword into the scale, in the hope of removing the last and most formidable of our competitors.

It is not an amiable picture, and it is not surprising that those who have drawn it should hate us. Naturally, there are some differences in the distribution of light and shade. Some of the German writers state their case with more, and some with less moderation. Most moderate of all are two writers whose names do not appear on the list just given, because their works are rather books than pamphlets. One of these—the best—I have not mentioned yet, but shall have to mention presently, J. J. Ruedorffer, *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik in der Gegenwart*. This is a work of real, and even sympathetic insight. Next to it would come a book that I have already mentioned more than once, Dr. Paul Rohrbach's *Der Krieg und die deutsche Politik*. The author is not free from the usual German obsessions, but as a rule he states his case temperately and with knowledge. There are also a few historians of whom the same may be said, notably Dr. Erich Marcks. It is saddest to us to have to put at the head of the list, Adolf von Harnack, whom we believed that we understood even better than some of his own countrymen and who we thought understood us. He writes with self-restraint and dignity, but in effect goes with the crowd. Dr. Friedrich Loofs, whom under no circumstances could we believe to be other than a true friend, reminds his readers that after all there is such a thing as 'English piety and English zeal for the spread of culture and civilized morals', though he too goes on to add that in the present war 'English idealism has yielded to English commercial egoism' and he too repeats the same unhappy fixed ideas of which we have been speaking.

The wonderful thing to me is how a nation of the

intellectual power and attainments of Germany could possibly have arrived at a judgement or series of judgements that are so far removed from the reality.

I will not say a word in disparagement of German science. Least of all would I disparage it on the grounds which I have seen alleged in this country. There may be a grain of truth in the allegation that its successes have been won, less by a sort of divinatory gift than by the steady application of disciplined method. As to this I am not sure. Take the field of classical scholarship, for instance. I should say that the prince of living scholars—the one scholar of most unrivalled range, whom our own scholars are most eager to consult on any new problem—is a German ; *honoris causa nomino* Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff. And he has no lack of the gift of divination. But however this may be, on the literary side of science at least, I would point to the great output of elaborate and comprehensive handbooks, so thorough, so accurate, and well digested. Our best work is on the same level—sometimes even beyond it—but how much less there is of it ! I have in my mind, for instance, such a series as that of Iwan Müller's *Handbooks*, the *Sammlung theologischer Handbücher* with the shorter *Grundriss d. theologischen Wissenschaften*, and that unique undertaking, *Die Kultur der Gegenwart*. We have nothing quite equal to Pauly-Wissowa or Hauck-Herzog, though on the whole we have a good record in the matter of Dictionaries and Encyclopaedias. Then there is the cloud of German monographs which form so much of the raw material of science.

I will not disparage German science. But there is one question that I cannot help asking, How is it that in regard to this present war, its causes and its significance, there are so few traces of German science ? Can it be said that any one of the eminent persons I have just

enumerated has written about the war scientifically or in the least degree in the spirit of science? To a certain extent, no doubt, the war itself militates against this. It is not to be expected that the official publications of the different belligerents should have had any wide circulation in Germany. But men of so much experience and of so much distinction in the study of history know how essential it is to go to the most authentic documents. By this time there are beginning to be indications that the official documents are being read. I wish I could see signs that they were being studied as they ought to be studied. For the most part they seem to have made no impression upon the minds of those who have read them. Surely, the only sound method for obtaining a constructive view of any statesman's motives and policy is to form a strict induction from his recorded words and actions. The British Blue Book contains in all some sixty-two telegrams and dispatches from Sir Edward Grey. One would have thought that any one with an eye to see could not help recognizing that these were all prompted by one honest and single-minded purpose, the maintenance of peace. They are absolutely inconsistent with any other purpose. And yet, when it comes to the forming of a judgement, these distinguished professors and writers put them all on one side and treat them as if they did not exist. Then they substitute for the motive and object which so distinctly emerges from them, another which is really a product of their own imagination and without any solid foundation. We are reminded of the old caricatures of German methods which represent them as constructing their object out of their own inner consciousness and completely ignoring its relation to fact. I have named some few exceptions above; but if one takes this body of pamphlet literature as a whole and looks in it for anything

like the sense of proportion, the objectivity and balanced judgement of true science, it is conspicuously wanting.

In like manner, as to the psychology. There is one secret of a sound psychology that I believe we in this country have learnt better than the Germans. If so, we have learnt it from our poets rather than from our philosophers. It is that a true judgement cannot be formed of any man, or body of men, without a certain modicum of sympathy and goodwill. The eye sees what it brings with it the power of seeing, and prejudice makes blind. We remember Hamlet. With his introspective bent and searching self-analysis, he knows that he himself presents a subtle and difficult problem ; but in face of it his enemies are baffled and helpless, because they do not possess the key.

> Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make me. You would play upon me ; you would seem to know my stops ; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery ; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass : and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ ; yet you cannot make it speak.

So I think we may say that, whatever may be the truth about this country of ours, its character is certainly not to be resolved into some half-dozen abstract categories—all bad. Neither its past nor its present are to be explained on such terms. It is something more than a bundle of vices. The description just given bears its own refutation on the face of it. It is not only a libel upon British nature, but upon human nature in general. Men are not made that way.

We must, however, meet at closer quarters the main criticisms passed upon us. It is to this task that I will now address myself.

II. *Motives imputed to Great Britain.* If we were to accept the German account of British action in relation to the war, it is a compound product of three root-motives: (1) jealousy of German commercial success; (2) selfishness and greed; and (3) as a cloak to cover these sins, deliberate hypocrisy. We will take these one by one.

1. It is perfectly true that the last forty years, and still more the last twenty and ten years, has been for Germany a period of extraordinary and unparalleled commercial development and success. If we look at the beginning of the process and at the end of the process, I do not suppose that there has been anything like it in the whole of the world's history, any example of progress so rapid and of success so complete. Our own country has no doubt made great advances in the same period; but we began at a higher level, and therefore the relative advance has not been so great. We have been actually overhauled in a good many things, and our supremacy is threatened in more.

The Germans assume that this progress of theirs is regarded by us with deep and consuming jealousy,[1] and that one of the reasons which made us go to war was in order to wreck the brilliant fabric which had thus been set up.

I know that I shall not be believed; but, in spite of that, I will venture to say: first, that we are not a jealous people; and in the second place, that even if we had been, we should never have thought for one moment

[1] The only evidence which I have seen produced for this view is a single extract—which appears in four quite distinct and widely-separated quarters—from the *Saturday Review* of 1897. The passage is no doubt crude and reckless, but it hardly furnishes sufficient ground for an indictment against a nation.

of going to war in order to make good losses sustained in time of peace.

First, as to the jealousy. It is of course always difficult to speak of national characteristics. In saying that we are not a jealous people, I do not of course mean it to be implied that there are no jealous people among us. There may quite well be a good many. All that I mean is that they are not so numerous as to make jealousy a conspicuous feature in the national character. The British people, I feel sure, is perfectly capable of seeing another nation as prosperous as itself, and in some ways more prosperous—with a more evenly distributed and effectively realized prosperity—without entertaining towards it any considerable feeling of jealousy. It will not only accept this spectacle, but look on at it and admire it, and give full credit to the qualities by which it has been brought about. It does not follow that it will not be roused to effort and emulation. And it is quite possible that even its renewed efforts still will not succeed. It may have again to confess itself beaten. But it will not therefore recoil, and look on sullenly and with an evil eye. It will take its fortune as it comes, and comfort itself with the reflection that it may do better another day.

The Germans look down with some contempt upon our love of sport. They regard it as frivolous and not worthy of a serious people. That is not our view. Just such an instance as that before us proves to us the value of our sports. The British boy, from his boyhood onwards, learns how to take a beating ; he learns how to take it with good temper, and to pass it over with a jest. He learns how to admire dash and energy and skill in an opponent. He bears him no malice ; all he asks for is a fair field and no favour.

As is usual in such matters, it may be not easy to say how much of this is cause and how much is consequence ; how far the love of sport is an outcome of the national character, and how far the national character itself is formed and trained by our traditional sports. There is of course action and reaction both ways.

We are a democratic people ; but the love of sport makes us all kin. It extends from the bottom to the top of society, and from the top to the bottom. It is deeply ingrained in us, and in our heart of hearts we are proud of it, and do not wish it otherwise. We are not so unmanly that we cannot endure to see ourselves distanced. We have had our ups and downs before, and we shall have them again.

If British ' phlegm ' means anything, it means that we can take quite calmly these vicissitudes of fortune. The last thing that we should think of doing would be to get so excited over them that we should dream of going to war. The Briton, when he is moved, is not a bad fighting man ; but he has made up his mind about war, and he does not believe in it. He thinks that it may be a test of a nation's strength, but that it is no test of a nation's right. He may in old times have thought that it was a test of right as well, but he has grown out of that belief. He knows that the belief still survives, and that he may himself be called upon to go to the war ; and when he is called, he will go. He hates injustice ; he hates bullying ; and, when his blood is up, he will take off his coat, like another. But, for all that, he deliberately disapproves of war ; he knows enough of it to have a horror of it ; he detests the misery and suffering which it brings in ways that are absolutely irrelevant to the cause of quarrel.

It is not for commerce that Great Britain is at war.

In such a cause, not statesmen only but the nation would never have thought the game worth the candle. If Britons are fighting now, it is for more spiritual issues. And if the great body of the nation has entered into the war in the way it has, that is proof that the sense of these issues is not dead. It is for an ideal that we are fighting, and the gallant rank and file who have gone out to Flanders have as much an ideal before them as Wolfe or Nelson had.

2. It is common doctrine in Germany that Great Britain is the robber-state *par excellence*, that her empire has been acquired by a combination of force and cunning, and that the time has come when she must be prepared to see it transferred to worthier hands.

The great preacher of this doctrine was von Treitschke, who died in 1896. But he was the leading exponent of modern history in his time ; he set the fashion, and the kind of language that he used has in more recent years become habitual with German historians generally. The younger generation of Germans has been trained from the schoolroom in this doctrine, and it has thus been prepared for that outburst of national hatred that has followed the entry of Great Britain into the present war.

It might be a matter for speculation how far this teaching has been prompted by the desire to find precedents for the kind of action which for some years past has been advocated in Germany. The root-principles of this action might be described by an unfriendly critic as a similar mixture of force and fraud. There is therefore an obvious convenience in conveying the impression that in the exercise of these attributes Great Britain had shown the way.

I will venture to say, however, that the doctrine as a whole is greatly exaggerated. Most human actions

are mixed, and I am not going to contend that British policy and British conduct has enjoyed any preternatural exemption from the common lot of all men. The history of Great Britain bears traces both of force and of fraud, like the history of every other nation under the sun. But if I am asked whether it is marked by these traits in a lower or a higher degree than that of other nations, I should say in a lower degree rather than a higher. It is only fair that Great Britain should be judged by the same standards that are applied to other peoples. But if that is done, I have little doubt that she will sustain the test quite as well as they.

It is said that the British Empire occupies no less than one-fifth of the earth's surface. But what proportion of all this vast extent is accounted for simply by the occupation of waste land? The whole surface of Australia, the whole surface of New Zealand, by far the greater part of what is now the Dominion of Canada would come under this description. The insignificant and dwindling aboriginal races of Australasia and the few wandering tribes of Red Indians in Canada would not be held, on any modern canons of judgement, to form any exception. The aborigines have been as well treated and have enjoyed as much security and happiness under British rule as under any other. Only one of the thirteen United States of America was conquered by force.

It is true that our great Elizabethan seamen had not a little of the buccaneer about them, but they were more than simple buccaneers. They had the idea of freedom, and they fought for freedom—not only their own, but for that of other nations as well. The religious motive also was strong with many of them. When our critics speak of the British Empire as founded upon

violence, they are usually thinking of India. But our relations with India began, and for some time went on, under the forms of peaceful commerce. The chief cause of the extension of British rule was the break-up of the Mogul Empire and the anarchy which followed upon it. The policy of the East India Company was deliberately opposed to intervention and conquest, but the officials on the spot often found themselves compelled to annex in self-defence. The rivalry with France supplied a motive of the same kind. We have had a few ambitious pro-consuls who have been bent on extending the British dominions; but they usually had a good deal to say for themselves, and they were rather restrained than instigated by influences from home.

If we look at the action of the British Government, only at rare intervals (as in the time of the elder Pitt) did it deliberately aim at conquest, and I do not think that the history of diplomacy would show that, even at the end of successful wars, Great Britain was specially grasping or tenacious in holding to its conquests. On several conspicuous occasions we certainly might have had more than we retained. At the end of the Napoleonic Wars several of the West Indian Islands which had been conquered were restored. At the same time the great Island of Java, which had been taken from the Dutch in 1811 and governed by the vigorous Sir Stamford Raffles, was given back to Holland, though there was no doubt as to its value. In 1864 the Ionian Islands were deliberately and spontaneously ceded to Greece, in deference to the principle of nationalities. It has been a rule of British policy to retain no more than was necessary for the maintenance of some important interest. In that way Great Britain has become possessed of its valuable chain of harbours and coaling stations (such as

Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Singapore, Hong Kong, and the treaty ports of China) with a minimum of friction and grievance to the neighbouring continental States.

If this country joined in the general scramble for territory which characterized the 'eighties and 'nineties of the last century, she was compelled to do so in self-defence. If the so-called ' partition ' of Africa had been carried out strictly on the principle of assigning territories to that Power which had the greatest number of existing interests represented, no Power would have had claims at all equal to the British. As a matter of fact Germany was given the first choice between what is now German East Africa and the British district of the same name. The whole transaction was a ' fair deal ' on the part of this country, in which Germany cannot be said to have had the worst.

A word must be said in detail about one of the items in this transaction—the cession of Heligoland. One of the German pamphleteers, Dr. Felix Salomon, Professor of History at Leipzig, writes about this as follows :

> The desire of our Kaiser for good relations with England met the English wishes, and so in 1890 the Heligoland agreement was signed. England aimed once more at an extension of its African possessions, in return for which it gave up to us by a piece of fortunate shortsightedness the little island in the North Sea. Twelve years later she would not have surrendered the island for half the African Continent (*Wie England unser Feind wurde*).

Strange to say, an English writer in one of the Oxford Pamphlets (*The Germans in Africa*, p. 26) uses similar language, and describes Lord Salisbury as making ' the fatal mistake of ceding Heligoland to Germany '. It is really absurd to suppose that a statesman like Lord Salisbury took this step without knowing perfectly well

what he was doing. A child could see, by looking at the map, the importance of Heligoland to Germany. But the cession was made deliberately and as a mark of real goodwill, on the Christian principle of doing to others as one would be done by. It was a natural grievance that Heligoland should be in possession of any foreign Power. It had no defensive value for Great Britain, except upon the theory of the 'offensive-defensive'; it was a standing menace to the German coast and harbours, whereas Germany required it to complete its scheme of self-defence. It is instructive to compare the case of Heligoland with that of Gibraltar. More than once the question has been raised in this country whether Gibraltar ought not to be restored to Spain. But here the balance of the argument is different. Gibraltar has a maximum value for us, while it is a minimum grievance to Spain. In such a case we may fairly draw the line in our own favour over a possession that was won in fair fight and that has been in our hands for over two centuries with an honourable history of its own. Historically, the rightful owner of Heligoland was Denmark, and not Germany, but the Danish frontier had been moved northwards, and the German claim was superior.

This case of Heligoland, with the cession of the Ionian Islands to Greece in 1864 and the retrocession of a number of islands in 1815, may be taken as proof that this country has not been the grasping close-fisted Power that she has been represented as being. I really doubt whether any other State can show a better record for moderation in its corporate dealings. The Government at home has not, as a rule, been grasping in its policy. Where it has deliberately extended its dominions, it has most frequently done so in order to secure some previous gain that was threatened by envious neighbours. The largest annexa-

tions territorially have been due to what may be called the process of natural expansion, through the roving and enterprising character of individuals penetrating deeper and deeper into the wilderness and drawing the flag after them.

3. The third charge brought against us is that of *hypocrisy*. What does this mean? Does it mean more than that we invoke the old standards of right and wrong, and do not always act up to them? There is a kind of cynicism which mistakes itself for sincerity, and has indeed the appearance of sincerity. If you tear up your scraps of paper whenever it suits you, if you let loose the ape and the tiger that still lurk in the jungle of human nature, you will not be accused of hypocrisy; but may you not be guilty of worse things? After all, hypocrisy is the tribute which vice pays to virtue. And need we even say 'vice'? Is it not often just the simple human weakness which cannot do—or does not do—the things that it would? Great Britain has waged some wars of which it is ashamed. It has also waged wars of which it is proud. We must deal honestly with ourselves and not hesitate to condemn our own conduct in the past where it calls for condemnation. Hostile critics, like Treitschke, are not fair to us. They apply to us a standard which they do not apply to themselves. They rarely lose an opportunity of denouncing an action of ours that falls short of the higher rules of morals, though they refuse to be bound by these rules when they find them inconvenient.

A crucial example of action on our part that was no doubt high-handed and open to criticism and that affords a welcome precedent to our enemies at the present time was the bombardment of Copenhagen in 1807. It had come to the knowledge of the British Government that, by a secret understanding between Alexander I and

Napoleon, the Danish Fleet was to be seized and used against us ; and we forestalled this action by sending an expedition and demanding the surrender of the Fleet to us until the close of the war. On the refusal of this demand, it was enforced by the bombardment of Copenhagen. There was an outcry at the time, and in this country opinion was divided. The plea put forward was that of ' self-preservation ', as in the case of the invasion of Belgium. It seems to have a somewhat better foundation, because the alleged ' necessity ' was at least in self-defence and did not mean the stealing of an advantage in an attack upon another state. But, in any case, two wrongs do not make a right. I hope it is true that Great Britain, while it does not seek to palliate its shortcomings in the past, is determined to raise its standard of uprightness in war in the future. I have said that we have waged some wars of which we are ashamed, and some of which we are proud. At least it may be said of this present war that we have never waged one in which we had less to be ashamed of and more of which to be proud.

On this matter of hypocrisy, I am glad to be able to appeal to an important German book which I have already mentioned. This book is entitled *Grundzüge der Weltpolitik in der Gegenwart*, and the author's name is given as ' J. J. Ruedorffer '. I gather, however, that this is a *nom de plume*, and that it conceals a writer of much experience and authority.[1] The book is certainly pitched at a much higher level than most of the German utterances to which reference is made in this paper. It represents the true German science which we all admire, and not mere polemics. It treats this country in particular with a degree of equity which is as rare as it is refreshing. It discusses (*before* the war, we remember) the psychology

[1] See Dr. Paul Rohrbach, *Der Krieg und die deutsche Politik*, p. 72.

in relation to their place in the world of the different nations that are engaged in it. The British temper is traced back to the Puritanism of the seventeenth century,

> which made of its tough everyday secular labour a duty and out of its fulfilment of such duty a religion. The seventeenth-century Englishman, as he sat in his counting-house, served his God in this way faithfully and humbly. The colonist who tilled the virgin soil of distant lands did his religious duty and toiled for the world-predominance of England. The two things for him were one and the same. On the ground of this seventeenth-century tradition arose that political naïveté of the Englishman, of which the Englishman himself is not conscious and which in its roots is rarely understood by other peoples. For the Englishman, Britishism (Britentum) and civilization, the idea of humanity, the peace of the world, and the idea of English world-predominance are one and the same. The predominance of England seems to him synonymous with the interest of the human race. England stands for freedom. The naive Englishman does not understand how there can be peoples which do not care to comprehend the blessings of English rule. As the cause of England is for him the cause of civilization, nay of the human race itself, every threat directed against this rule appears to him as a sin against civilization. *This temper is altogether honourable. It is often felt by other peoples as so much falsehood and hypocrisy. But that it is not. It is naïveté, but not hypocrisy.* . . . When on the ground of this temper England appears to every Englishman as the proper bearer of the idea of humanity, on the same temper also rests the Briton's naive belief in his right to world-predominance. This right does not seem to the Briton to rest upon the proportion of his strength or on the preponderance of English interests ; it is a kind of divine right, to encroach upon which even an enemy has no moral right.

It is in full keeping with these ideas that

> for the naive Englishman, the blame for the burden of armaments falls upon those states which seek to challenge England's unlimited command of the sea, which the Englishman regards as a right.

The repeated declarations of the German Government that their armaments are purely defensive, for the protection of their growing commerce, have made no impression upon him,

> he cannot understand that the German armaments can have any other object than an attack upon the English sea-power, inasmuch as the protection of commerce and the freedom of the seas is best guaranteed by this same British sea-power.[1]

This striking passage is an example of the different aspect which a national attitude or idea assumes when it is studied with something of real sympathy and detachment. We should not indeed ourselves—except perhaps some of the more extreme imperialists among us—lay quite so much stress on *Weltherrschaft*. We are content to rest our widespread sea-power on lower ground, on the instinct of self-preservation which makes us feel that complete freedom of communication by sea is for us a question of life and death. Our predominance at sea secures this, and we shall maintain it as long as we can.

It is true that there is in this attitude a certain amount of naïveté. Beyond the instinct of self-preservation, to which reference has just been made, it is not fully reasoned out ; it does not involve any theoretic precedence over other nations. And it is attended by a complete consciousness of good intentions. This sea-power of ours is held by us in trust for the interests of the world at large. We are anxious that it should not be abused ; we desire to show the fullest respect for the rights and liberties of other states, great or small. We seek to maintain the freedom of the seas and of commerce for ourselves, and at the same time for others as well as ourselves.

Is not this claim a just claim ? Can it be said that our

[1] op. cit., pp. 90, 92 f.

predominance at sea is exercised oppressively? The chief allegation to the contrary has reference to our conduct, not in time of peace or under normal conditions, but in time of war. There is a certain amount of protest against our claim to the right of search for contraband in neutral vessels; and the Germans heap up epithets upon us because we maintain our own ground in this matter. The point is not one that I have specially studied, and I do not wish to express any private opinion about it. The claim, however, seems to be involved in the right to institute a strict blockade; and that right appears to hold good as much on sea as on land. If the Germans had the right to invest Paris in 1870–1, and to cut off all supplies from non-combatants as well as combatants; and if in fact that is the constant practice in sieges, I cannot see that there is any just cause of complaint against a like cutting off of supplies by sea. In any case, the practice does not involve anything like the risk to the lives and property of neutrals that is entailed by the German policy of mine-laying and attacks by submarines. If some better agreement can be come to on these heads, so much the better. But it certainly does not lie with the Germans to cast a stone at us.

4. The British character as a whole is more complex than our foes, and sometimes even our friends, altogether realize. The shop-keeping instinct, deeply ingrained as no doubt it is, is far from being a full account of it. We have no reason to be ashamed of our commercialism, any more than the Germans have need to be ashamed of theirs.[1] Under the newer conditions, they have some advantages

[1] I once saw on the stage an eighteenth-century play, *The Road to Ruin* (1792), by T. Holcroft ('successively stable-boy, shoemaker, tutor, actor', and other things besides), which seemed to me to give a worthy picture of the British ideal of mercantile integrity.

over us, which have already made themselves felt. It may be that, apart from the present war, they would have won from us still more than they have. It was all to the good that German competition was supplying a stimulus to our trade which it had really begun to need. We should not have given way without a good stand-up struggle. Both peoples would seem to have a real gift for commerce, which perhaps belongs to the common stock from which we come. It may be that, just as our qualities came to the front in the earlier stages, theirs would come to the front in the later. But we have still so much in common that a permanent monopoly is not likely to be assured for either. Looking at modern Germany and modern Britain, it may well be thought that the part of the national character which expresses itself in commerce is the bedrock or backbone of the whole. The good solid Saxon base of integrity, energy, diligence, and punctuality, organizing power, and the combination of enterprise with caution is characteristic of the two middle classes. But when we look beyond these qualities, there is more divergence. The Germans have a special outlet in the direction of music and philosophic thought. Our gift would seem to lie rather in the direction of poetry and some other forms of literature and art. It would be a great mistake to underrate the imaginative side of British character. Some would see in this an expression of the Celtic vein in our composite nature. We have some skill in catching the lighter, more fugitive, and evanescent effects, which is seen in the poetry of Spenser, Shelley, and Keats, and in the art of J. M. W. Turner and our painters in water-colours. There is yet another vein which seems to have affinity with the Norman or Romance element in us, which comes out perhaps in Milton and the more aristocratic side of our statesmanship and culture. It

must not be supposed that English history has always been dull and prosaic. Very much the contrary. We too had our share in the chivalry of the Middle Ages. Our own Black Prince was as much a model of chivalry as Bayard or Du Guesclin. The 'very parfit gentle knight' has been a standing figure in our annals: taken up by Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Walter Raleigh in the time of Queen Elizabeth; then by Falkland and Lovelace and the best of the Cavaliers; then by the Jacobites; then by men like Wolfe and Nelson and our Indian heroes, C. J. Napier and Herbert Edwardes and John Nicholson and Bartle Frere; and we might end our list with Gordon and Lord Roberts, who died the other day. We too have had our forlorn hopes and lost causes, with all the halo of romance which attaches to them. It is an unjust taunt which denies to us the power of insight into and sympathy with the qualities of other races, even those so different from our own as the peoples of India. Witness such books as *Kim* and other works of Rudyard Kipling, Mrs. F. A. Steel, and other less distinguished writers. If we had not the power of attaching other peoples, we should not have Indian princes at the front and Indian troops fighting side by side with our own in the trenches now.

A word may be said about one feature in the national character which is often commented upon unfavourably. It is true that the Briton is proud, that he is apt to go through the world with a certain degree of self-assertion. I will only say in regard to this, that it has not as a rule been the worst kind of self-assertion. It has been at least quiet and calm, not noisy and blustering. It is deeply rooted in the national history, and behind it is a sense of the greatness of that history. It has about it

something of the old *civis Romanus sum*, with perhaps an added touch of the Scottish *nemo me impune lacessit*. It is held to be cold, and it is certainly reserved.

In its outward presentation this British pride has varied somewhat at the different periods of our history, along with the particular stage of culture that the nation had attained to at the time. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century it was marked by a certain aristocratic *hauteur*, strong, but not so distant as the French. All through the middle of the last century it took its colour from the expanding prosperity of commerce; it descended to the middle classes and was apt to become at once pushing and self-satisfied. In its latest phases it has been more democratic, and is based mainly on the consciousness of personal freedom. One whose life extends to the proverbial three score years and ten will have seen a distinct change in the national habit in this respect, which he will probably regard as a change for the better. The ugly 'jingo' temper, which came in in the 'eighties and 'nineties, was always condemned by the sounder portion of the nation. But it was chastened by the wholesome discipline of the Boer War and by defeats of various kinds in athletics and other fields which the Briton had been in the habit of regarding as his own. In my own experience I have never seen a finer type of British manhood than the young men who have gone out, especially from the Universities, to officer the newly-raised armies, with ample power of command and yet modest and refined, and with a glow of restrained enthusiasm which will find expression in deeds rather than in words.

III. *Particular Principles of British Policy.* The Germans, as a rule, do not depreciate at least the success of British foreign and colonial policy. They praise its

continuity and tenacity of purpose; and their chief accusation against it is that it succeeds better than it deserves; they regard it as unscrupulous, and they set down its success to the well-directed exercise of craft and cunning. The Germans have got the idea that at the present time the British Empire rests no longer on the virile qualities by which it was won, but on the diplomatic and administrative skill by which it is guarded and preserved.

One of the specially amiable qualities for which they give us credit is the art of fishing in troubled waters, the tactics of embroiling other nations with one another while we carry off the prizes. They think that we show great dexterity in getting other nations to do our dirty work and to bear the brunt of fighting in our quarrels, but that our own aims are always selfish.

It is one of the characteristics of the modern German *Realpolitik* that it discards all sentiment, and that it includes under the head of 'sentiment' many of the old-fashioned Christian virtues. In particular, it has but little use for the 'charity which thinketh no evil'. In the case of other peoples, where it is possible to assign a good or a bad motive for action, the bad is almost always preferred.

We must take this peculiarity as we find it, though (as I have just been arguing) this hypercritical tendency results in the supposed portraiture of other peoples which is a mere caricature of the reality; it is a sort of perpetual 'Caliban on Setebos'; one might think that 'some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably'.

However this may be, there are two concrete principles of British policy which the Germans regard as specially directed against themselves. One is the so-called 'Balance

of Power ' ; the other is what they call the *Einkreisungspolitik*, or policy which aims at isolating Germany among the nations and ' hemming it in ' with hostile powers. These two supposed methods are obviously related to each other ; the ' isolation ' of the suspected or offending nation is the means of safeguarding the ' Balance of Power '. I must go on to discuss each of these ideas.

1. The doctrine of the Balance of Power is no great mystery of statecraft. We may call it a mere rule of thumb, if we please.[1] It is just a convenient formula to describe a principle which has been found to work for good. Ideally speaking, the society of nations should be a happy family, each member of which goes on its way intent upon its own development, but duly respecting the rights and interests of all the rest. This end is most likely to be attained when there is a certain equilibrium, especially between the leading members of the group, where no one nation so stands out above the others that it is tempted to take up an overbearing attitude towards the weaker among them and to seek its own aggrandizement at their expense. Where the leading states are fairly equal and the chances of war are uncertain, it is more likely that all will be ready to acquiesce in the *status quo*, and that each will be content to live its own life in peace and amity. But where some one state forges ahead of the rest in power and in the consciousness of power it is apt to become restless and grasping. It comes to be regarded with a certain amount of distrust and apprehension. These feelings are not the same thing as jealousy ; they need not imply, and very often do not

[1] Mr. Lindsay (in his valuable pamphlet *War against War*, p. 20) criticizes the doctrine of the Balance of Power. But I am not sure that he would object to the limited and undogmatic application of it, which is all that is advocated in these pages.

imply, envy at the success and prosperity of others; but they are inspired by the instinct of self-preservation.

> It is excellent
> To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous
> To use it like a giant.

And the border line between the two states is easily passed. The stronger power sometimes needs to be protected against its own temptations.

On two great occasions in the history of modern Europe this condition of things has prevailed—in the time of Louis XIV and in the time of Napoleon. It was, I believe, in the first of these epochs that the idea of the balance of power made its appearance in English literature; and it was natural that it should be taken up again in the second. It had indeed been in existence all through the interval; there are traces of it in the elder Pitt. Both under Louis XIV and in the time of Napoleon the excessive preponderance of one power was met by coalitions in which Great Britain took part, and in both cases as an ally of the Germanic states. In both cases the British alliance was welcome, and in both cases the policy pursued is commonly supposed to have been justified. The resistance to Napoleon is justly regarded as the most glorious page in Prussian history; and in that resistance Great Britain had its share. As an island state, it never had a large army; and it is not surprising that its chief contribution should take the form of sea-power. Still it played a substantial and not unworthy part on land, both in the Spanish peninsula and in the War of the Hundred Days. It does not deserve to have thrown in its teeth the fact that associated with the British army were some of its natural Germanic allies, especially Hanoverians and Hessians. They were fighting their own battles, just as much as those of Great Britain. Neither is it to be won-

dered at that a policy which had approved itself as sound in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries should still be thought to hold good in the twentieth. The policy is not invalidated because there has been a certain transference of parts.

I do not gather that the German critics challenge the doctrine of the balance of power as applied to the wars of Louis XIV and Napoleon ; what they really deny is the parallel as applied to themselves. They deny that they have been domineering ; they deny that they have given cause for suspicion ; they regard themselves as the most docile and well-behaved of European nations. I am afraid that the answer to this must be an appeal to facts. ' What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear ? ' What was the meaning of the demonstration at Tangier in 1905 ? What was the meaning of the ' shining armour ' episode in 1909 ? What was the meaning of the crises of 1911 and 1912 ? Why that long succession of Army Acts and Navy Bills, going back in the one case to 1893 and in the other to 1898, and steadily expanding in both until the climax was reached in 1912 and 1913 ? Why the persistent agitation of the Pan-Germanic League, the Navy League, the Army League, the Imperial Defence League ? Why that diligent inculcation of hatred of this country from Treitschke onwards ? Why that steady development, based partly on Treitschke and partly on Nietzsche, of a definite Gospel of Force, designed to justify aggression and high-handed action of all kinds ? Before Germany can establish its claim to be considered a peace-loving nation, its first step must be to explain all these things. When it has done so, it will have gone some way to prove that the appeal to the balance of power has been a mistake.

This doctrine, whatever else may be said of it, has at

least the merit of being purely defensive. It does not come into play until the stronger power has shown actual signs of threatening to attack its neighbours. And there is one sovereign antidote for any ill results it may cause—the avoidance of provocation.

2. The story of the 'isolating' policy is a pendant to the story of the balance of power. It is another example of something perfectly innocent and harmless in itself interpreted as darkly malignant and Machiavellian. To understand the real origin of this policy, we must go back to the time of the Boer War. And, as I have occasion to do this, I will permit myself one paragraph of digression.

If we were a vindictive people, given to brooding over fancied wrongs, we should have a valid grievance against the Germans for their behaviour at that time. I do not mean that they had not a perfect right to side with the Boers. We could owe them no honest grudge for that. We believe that we had a strong case of our own. President Krüger and his associates had made themselves very troublesome and disagreeable. The 'outlanders' in the Transvaal had real grievances, and the peace and prosperity of our colonies were seriously threatened. We had certain rights in the Transvaal and in the Orange Free State which could not be altogether ignored. We therefore had a case against the Boer republics; but it was not to be expected that this case should be appreciated as highly by other nations as it was by ourselves. It was only natural that they should sympathize with the weaker side; and the Germans looked upon the Boers as ethnographically akin to themselves. It was not their friendship for the Boers and their hostility to us that we could count up against them; but it was the way in which they showed their friendship and their hostility. All sorts of scandalous stories were circulated about us

by the notorious Dr. Leyds and his hirelings. And these stories were eagerly raked together and published with yet further embellishments in Germany. The German Press and the German people as a whole took no trouble whatever to verify them. To its honour, be it said, there was one section of the German people which did take this trouble. The *History of the Boer War* by the German General Staff contains one handsome paragraph of generous exculpation of our troops from the charges brought against them. There is many an Englishman who remembers that paragraph to the credit of the General Staff for good. I am not aware that any other public amends were made. And the charges were such as recoiled upon the heads of those who made them. There is, I am afraid, a strain of grossness in the German nature, and that grossness was seen in these charges at its worst.

At the time of the Boer War Great Britain was without a friend among the leading nations of the Continent. The long-standing good relations with Italy and the recently revived cordiality of the kindred people in America were not seriously disturbed ; but France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia were all more or less hostile. This state of things was irksome both to King and people. A Unionist Ministry was in power, and Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Balfour set themselves to win back the good understanding which had been lost. King Edward VII, quite simply and spontaneously but without any very recondite motives, fell in with their aims. His personality was such as to fit him admirably for the part of mediator. The Foreign Office turned first towards France ; and in April 1904 a treaty was signed which practically settled all the outstanding questions and causes of friction between the two nations. This was the beginning of the Anglo-

French Entente, which has gone on strengthening ever since.

As the respective parts of the King and his Ministers in this *démarche* are often misunderstood, and especially in Germany, it may be worth while to explain them a little more at length. I do not know of any quarter to which I can go for an authoritative estimate of King Edward VII and the part that he played in politics better than the article in the Second Supplement to the *Dictionary of National Biography* by the editor, Sir Sidney Lee.

> King Edward cannot be credited with the greatness that comes of statesmanship and makes for the moulding of history. Neither the constitutional checks on his power nor his discursive tastes and training left him much opportunity of influencing effectually political affairs. No originating political faculty can be assigned him. For the most part he stood with constitutional correctness aloof from the political arena at home. On questions involving large principles he held no very definite views. He preferred things to remain as they were. But he regarded all party programmes with a cheerful optimism, sanguinely believing that sweeping proposals for reform would not go very far. From youth he followed with close attention the course of foreign politics, and it was not only during his reign that he sought in tours abroad and in hospitalities at home to keep in personal touch with foreign rulers and statesmen. His main aim as a traveller was pleasurable recreation and the exchange of social courtesies. But he rarely missed an occasion of attesting his love of peace among the nations. Not that he was averse from strong measures, if he thought them necessary to the due assertion of his country's rights. But in his later years he grew keenly alive to the sinfulness of provoking war lightly, and to the obligation that lay on rulers of only appealing to its arbitrament in the last resort. He was a peacemaker, not through diplomatic initiative or ingenuity, but by force of his faith in the blessing of peace and by virtue of the influence which passively attached to his high station and to his tempera-

> ment. . . . There was a specious ground for the suggestion that in home affairs he did too little and in foreign affairs too much. . . . The impression was at times encouraged . . . that the King was exerting abroad diplomatic powers which under the constitution belonged to his ministers alone. He grew conscious of the exaggerated importance which the foreign public attached to his foreign movements, and he confessed at times to some embarrassment. But he fully realized the futility of encroaching on ministerial responsibilities, and in his intercourse with foreign rulers and diplomatists, so far as politics came within the range of the conversation, he confined himself to general avowals of loyal support of ministerial policy.

To complete the picture, a portion of the next paragraph should be given :

> His sociability, his love of pleasure, and the breadth of his human interests stood him in good stead in all relations of life. He had an unaffected desire for others' happiness, and the sport and amusements in which he openly indulged were such as the mass of his subjects could appreciate and share. The austere looked askance on his recreations or deemed that the attention he paid them was excessive. But his readiness to support actively causes of philanthropy and social beneficence almost silenced articulate criticism. His compassion for suffering was never in question.

So simple a matter as the gaining and keeping of friendship was easily grasped. And, for the rest, the King had only to go on being himself and indulging his natural bent. He spent as a rule about three months in the year abroad, and he spent them in the same way ; so that he might well seem to be pursuing a deliberate and consistent purpose. But this was no matter of profound policy ; it was only the natural expansiveness of a genial and sunny disposition. At the same time I quite admit that the most artful diplomatist could not have accomplished his mission more effectively.

King Edward VII had a special love for France, and was especially at home among the French people. But the same thing happened when it became a question of cementing the *entente* with Russia in 1907. Here there was more difficulty because of the deep-rooted difference between British and Russian methods of government. But the difficulty was in popular sentiment, and did not affect the course of the negotiations. As in the case of France, so also in the case of Russia, the ties between the two nations have become closer every year. The *rapprochement* has been greatly helped by the development in Russia of liberal ideas and institutions.

The Germans describe Sir Edward Grey as ' the executor of King Edward VII '. He is really the continuator of the policy of Lord Lansdowne. They are both, as it happens, members of the same college (Balliol College, Oxford), and they are both statesmen of whom the country has the deepest reason to be proud. They are alike by birth and by tradition inheritors of that aristocratic line of statesmen which stretches back through the nineteenth into the eighteenth century, the one a Liberal-Conservative, and the other a conservatively-minded Liberal. Neither can be credited in any way with the arts of the demagogue ; in both the real basis is the basis of character. The leading feature in both is a high integrity. The idea that either Lord Lansdowne or Sir Edward Grey could in any circumstances be guilty of anything unworthy of an English gentleman is to be absolutely scouted. Plain and unadorned of speech, but circumspect, patient, and calm, unswervingly loyal in his dealings as well with friends as with enemies, Sir Edward Grey is a perfect type of the man whom the British people delight to have to speak for them.

It will be seen that such a portrait as this is far from

corresponding to that which possesses the German imagination. Their idea is a compound of Mephistopheles and Machiavelli; but nothing could be further from the reality. Sir Edward Grey has nothing in common with the Italian, and there is no smell of sulphur about his motives or personality. The Germans often give us credit for a diabolical ingenuity which few Britons possess, but they do not give us enough credit for honesty. I am afraid that their idea of Sir Edward Grey has been formed upon the same lines as other ideas of theirs. It is built up *a priori* out of the malignant motives which they attribute to us. I submit to them that this method is not scientific; the only scientific method of arriving at a man's character is to study it closely in his recorded words and actions. Sir Edward Grey's record is open to the world; and, if not now, they will some day do him justice.

The aim of the advances towards France and Russia was positive and not negative. It was not, in the first instance at least, directed against any one; the desire was to form friendships and not to satisfy enmities. If, as time has gone on, it has assumed more of the character of a mutual assurance, this has been the growth of circumstances, and, I am afraid I must say, has been mainly due to the attitude of Germany. A nation that is constantly increasing its armies and its fleets and that no diplomacy can persuade to pause in the process, is sure to cause disquietude, and sure to impel its neighbours into doing the same thing. We have many times over tried to come to some agreement, so as to relax the tension, but our efforts have been in vain.

And yet, all the time, we have tried to make it clear that our understandings with France and Russia were defensive, and not aggressive, in their object, by showing

our readiness to enter upon a similar understanding with Germany. Steady efforts have been made in this direction on more than one occasion, and particularly during the two years immediately preceding the outbreak of the war. It was commonly supposed that Lord Haldane's visit to Berlin in the autumn of 1912 had this intention. No public announcement has been made in this country, but one of the best authorities on the German side states expressly that the conversations thus begun had been brought to a successful conclusion.

> Now that everything has been changed, it may be safely said (*kann man ruhig sagen*) that the negotiations with England about the delimitation of our spheres of interest in the East and in Africa had been brought to a close and signed [i.e., I suppose, initialled by the negotiators], and that the only remaining question was as to their publication. In Africa, English policy had gone a surprisingly long way to meet us. In Turkey, not only had large concessions been made to the German point of view on the question of the Bagdad railway, but the other matters connected with this, the working of the Mesopotamian petroleum fields and the navigation of the Tigris, which England had hitherto had in her sole possession, were regulated along with German participation.[1]

This statement is important, and I should have thought that the time had come when our own Foreign Office might explicitly confirm or deny it. It has a material bearing on the whole question of Anglo-German relations. I cannot see in it anything less than a complete disproof of the whole theory of *Einkreisungspolitik*. Surely there could be no question of 'hemming in' Germany, where Germany herself was included in the circle. There was in fact nothing left to 'hem in'. In other words, the

[1] Dr. Paul Rohrbach, *Der Krieg und die deutsche Politik*, p. 85.

friendships already formed were not intended to be exclusive. What the British policy aimed at was really the peace of the world, or friendship all round.

I must permit myself a brief excursus to substantiate what I have been saying. I will give a short *catena* of extracts from the British Blue Book to show the earnestness with which Sir Edward Grey worked for peace—and in particular to show how anxious he was to consult the feelings and wishes and even the interests of Germany.

It will be remembered that Sir Edward Grey proposed joint action by the less directly interested Powers—France, Italy, Germany, and Great Britain—to mediate between Austria and Russia. The German Government did not approve of the mode of procedure suggested, and the British Minister at once ceased to press his own proposal, and begged Germany to substitute anything she pleased for it that was at all likely to have the desired effect.

> I told the German Ambassador that an agreement arrived at direct between Austria and Russia would be the best possible solution. I would press no proposal as long as there was a prospect of that. . . . The German Government had said that they were favourable in principle to mediation between Russia and Austria if necessary. They seemed to think the particular method of conference, consultation, or discussion, or even conversations *à quatre* in London too formal a method. I urged that the German Government should suggest any method by which the influence of the four Powers could be used together to prevent war between Austria and Russia. France agreed, Italy agreed. The whole idea of mediation or mediating influence was ready to be put into operation by any method that Germany could suggest if mine was not acceptable. In fact, mediation was ready to come into operation by any method that Germany

thought possible if only Germany would 'press the button' in the interests of peace.[1]

This was followed up on the next day (July 30) by a dispatch to the British Ambassador at Berlin which is really of great importance :

> You should speak to the Chancellor in the above sense, and add most earnestly that the one way of maintaining the good relations between England and Germany is that they should continue to work together to preserve the peace of Europe ; if we succeed in this object, the mutual relations of Germany and England will, I believe, be *ipso facto* improved and strengthened. For that object His Majesty's Government will work in that way with all sincerity and goodwill.
>
> And I will say this : If the peace of Europe can be preserved, and the present crisis safely passed, my own endeavour will be to promote some arrangement to which Germany could be a party, by which she could be assured that no aggressive or hostile policy would be pursued against her or her allies by France, Russia, and ourselves, jointly or separately. I have desired this and worked for it, as far as I could, through the last Balkan crisis, and, Germany having a corresponding object, our relations sensibly improved. The idea has hitherto been too Utopian to form the subject of definite proposals, but if this present crisis, so much more acute than any that Europe has gone through for generations, be safely passed, I am hopeful that the relief and reaction which will follow may make possible some more definite *rapprochement* between the Powers than has been possible hitherto.[2]

It should be noted how Sir Edward Grey detaches himself for the moment from the other Entente Powers, weighs with all sympathy the legitimate interests and anxieties of Germany, and undertakes to do his very best to safeguard them. What opening for a really pacific solution could be more promising ?

[1] *British Blue Book*, No. 84. [2] op. cit., No. 101.

It was really in pursuance of the same proposal that the following telegram was sent on July 31 :

> I said to [the] German Ambassador this morning that if Germany could get any reasonable proposal put forward which made it clear that Germany and Austria were striving to preserve European peace, and that Russia and France would be unreasonable if they rejected it, I would support it at St. Petersburg and Paris, and go to the length of saying that if Russia and France would not accept it His Majesty's Government would have nothing more to do with the consequences ; but, otherwise, I told [the] German Ambassador that if France became involved we should be drawn in.[1]

Yet, in the face of these perfectly unambiguous and transparently honest utterances, Sir Edward Grey is accused of instigating the war ! Of all the unjust charges recorded in history, from Potiphar's wife downwards, I do not know one more unjust.

3. It is true that within five days after the document last quoted Great Britain and Germany were at war. The transition was no doubt abrupt. And it was probably this abruptness which caused the British ultimatum to fall upon Germany with a special shock, and so contributed to the intensity of feeling with which it was received. Doubtless the transition was abrupt. It was so, because the march of events was abrupt ; and for that Great Britain at least was not responsible. It was that unjustifiable time-limit attached to the Austrian Note to Serbia which hurried all the subsequent proceedings and, next to it, the suddenness of the German ultimatums to France and Russia. It should not be overlooked that, in his last quoted dispatch, Sir Edward Grey, along with his pacific advances, was careful to convey a quiet warning that British neutrality could not in all circumstances be

[1] op. cit., No. 111.

depended upon. The hint was just right. There was nothing in the least threatening about it ; and yet it reminded the German Government that there were two parallel lines on which events were moving with great rapidity—in the East the question of Austria, Serbia, and Russia, and in the West the interests of France and Belgium. So far as the East was concerned, Great Britain's rôle was purely that of the peacemaker ; but in the Western vortex there was great danger that she might herself be drawn in. Between these two very diverse sets of conditions, the position of Sir Edward Grey was extremely delicate and critical. But it seems to me that he has nothing with which to reproach himself. The course that he took was as straightforward as it could be.

It was hardly to be expected that Germany should make the distinction which Britain had to make, or that she would look at it with British eyes. For her, there was but one great issue, to which the different parts and localized questions were all subordinate. In the front was the rivalry of Teuton and Slav. In the background (so far as Great Britain was concerned) was the standing suspicion of British jealousy in the matter of trade. German public opinion combined the two things, and by doing so was led to impute to this country conduct peculiarly invidious, which (if it had been founded upon fact) might have gone a long way to justify the outburst of hate which the supposition of it undoubtedly helped to cause. Many Germans actually imagined that we chose the moment when they were involved in a big war to wreak upon them our jealousy to the best advantage and with the best hope of regaining what we had lost. They were prepared to think us capable of any meanness ; but this at least we utterly repudiate.

What made the matter still worse was that the war,

as it then stood, was practically a race war. It was really a trial of strength between Teuton and Slav. And then, from this point of view, a further race complication came in. Whatever might be said on other occasions, for the purpose of this controversy England—in this connexion at least it seems right to speak of England, rather than of Great Britain—was regarded as itself Teutonic, an outlying member of the family. On that ground it was assumed that the proper place for England was side by side with the Double Alliance. If that were so, if Germany had really wished to have England for an ally, she had gone a strange way to attain her object. No doubt there were individuals who really wished to be friends with England, there were not only individuals, but scattered circles, who really wished it. But there were still larger circles that wanted war, and wanted it specially with England. Besides the large amount of what we may call honest and open hostility, there were perhaps still more who had an eye to booty. 'England', says Professor Wundt, 'bears too heavy a load of colonial possessions for such a little island. She must pay us heavily out of her superfluity if, as a result of this war, a just division is to be made of the work of the nations in spreading culture in the colonies.' There are others who are animated by the same kind desire to relieve us of our responsibilities. These, we might suppose, would rather have Britain for an enemy than for a friend. And most of the flag-waving and demonstrations have come rather from this quarter than from the other. It will be remembered what an outcry there was in Germany, when the Kaiser, in a genial moment, gave expression to Anglophil sentiments. There were therefore a good many Germans who at least 'dissembled their love'. Still no doubt the big fleet would have been welcome as an addition to the big

battalions ; and perhaps, when the big battalions had done their work, the big fleet might have been disposed of as well.

However this might be, that England should interpose in a quarrel between Teuton and Slav was regarded as an act of treachery against the race. And the motive assigned for it was pure jealousy and greed.

This is one of the versions of the origin of the war that is most widely current in Germany. And we can hardly be surprised that, on the assumption of its truth, it should have given rise to a storm of indignation. The Germans, I am afraid, were prepared to hate us ; this one lesson had been dinned into their ears from their school days onwards ; and most of them had learnt it pretty well. So, when the two nations came to blows—and came to blows (as the Germans supposed) under the conditions just described—the cry for vengeance went up to heaven.

And yet, after all, behind that cry (as we have seen) there was a big assumption ; and it is only right that this assumption should be tested. Is it true that, purely out of self-interest, Great Britain joined in a quarrel between Teuton and Slav upon the Slav's side ? I venture to say with the utmost confidence that to represent the matter thus is a complete distortion. I venture to say that, when the war broke out, not one Englishman in a hundred had any thought of the Slav quarrel. It is true that we were friends with Russia. But that friendship did not commit us to any share in Russia's Balkan policy. Sir Edward Grey made it perfectly clear from the first that the Serbian question was no concern of ours. If Russia went to war with Austria, or with Austria and Germany combined, we should certainly, so far as that issue went, have remained neutral. The Germans assume that our sympathies would have been with them, because of their

culture and of our indebtedness to it. We have a great respect for their culture ; and many of us are very conscious how much they owe to it. But we have also learnt to have a great respect for Russia, a people to which we are sure that Germany does no sort of justice. We should have looked on with deep interest and with deep sorrow that two such peoples should be slaughtering each other. But we should have maintained a strict neutrality.

What drew us out of this neutrality was the entrance into the quarrel of France. Our relations with France were closer. They were indefinite, and did not bind us to support in war. It was just this which made the question of peace or war so acute for us. We had to decide, and to decide at almost a moment's notice. The decision taken involved more than was included in our obligations ; but I for one have no doubt that our decision was right.

The truth was that we could not stand by and see France crushed, as we knew that Germany was determined to crush her. We could not do it, either for her sake or for our own. We had learnt to love France, and the French had returned our advances. We were resolved not to see what France stood for—her culture, as the Germans would say—destroyed. We hated the temper which prompted this destruction, and we knew that we ourselves would be its next victim.

Then came the breach of the neutrality of Belgium, which carried with it for us a clear and definite obligation. So Great Britain's share in the war was sealed.

These are the plain and simple facts ; and these, so far as Germany is concerned, are the head and front of our offending. What does it amount to ?

It is true that the old doctrine of the balance of power still remains as a rough and general principle of British policy. It means for us that, as in the past so also in the

present, we should resist any state that showed Napoleonic ambitions. And the Germans have certainly taken considerable pains to convince, not only us, but the rest of the world, that their ambitions are really Napoleonic. Yet it was on no such general ground, but because of the specific aggression against France and Belgium, that we went to war.

The so-called policy of 'isolation' we have seen to be a mere myth. What is true in it is that we were in search of friends, and willing enough to make the Germans our friends as well as other peoples. Only at the last moment and under the severe pressure of honourable obligations, did we allow our friendship to involve us in war with the enemy of our friends. Why Germany pushed us to this extremity, Germany itself must decide.

The third idea, that we took advantage of a quarrel between Teuton and Slav to press home a quarrel of our own, is equally baseless. We should have been more than glad if it had been possible for us to remain neutral, but honour and duty forbade.

C. AN ATTEMPT AT SYNTHESIS

And now the time has come when we must contemplate this great convulsion as a whole and seek to draw its different parts together and strike something of a balance between them.

I. *Intense Tragedy of the War.* One conclusion seems to stand out above all others. It is the greatest tragedy (but one) in all the recorded history of the human race from its first beginnings until now. The one exception is the event which happened on a hill outside Jerusalem nearly nineteen hundred years ago. That event was unique in the spiritual significance which it was to have for generations upon generations then unborn. It was a single point the influence of which was to expand in ever-widening circles down the rest of history. The tragedy of the present day has not yet quite reached its climax ; but it is rapidly reaching it by a succession of gigantic strides measured by months and days. The tragedy, however, does not turn merely upon its magnitude. It turns rather upon the fact that these tremendous consequences, so incalculable in their extent and range, ought not to have happened. They ought not to have happened, and probably need not and would not have happened, at least on the scale they have, if there had been time to prevent them. There can be little doubt that European diplomacy would have found the means of limiting and localizing the conflict, if there had been any space allowed for joint and concerted action and for calm reflection. As it was, there was no adequate space for this. No time was really lost by diplomacy, which got to work at once and very earnestly—I think

we may justly say—under the leadership of our own Foreign Minister. But there were two movements going on side by side, the diplomatic and the military ; and the latter outstripped the former.

We at least, in Great Britain, are not called upon to bear the blame of this. I must speak my mind in this respect. It seems to me that the real blame belongs to the two Powers who issued, or permitted to be issued, the Note to Serbia with the time-limit attached to it. I have already expressed and defended the view that, when once this step had been taken, the arresting of the further conflagration had been rendered so difficult as to be practically almost impossible. It was, I believe, as I have said, not absolutely impossible in itself, but impossible within the limits of time allotted to it. On such, to all appearance, comparatively insignificant details do the most terrific consequences depend.

Under these most difficult conditions, it is not surprising that the efforts of European diplomacy failed. The responsibility, I cannot but think, must be held to lie with those who created the conditions. I will not enlarge upon this. They must be left to settle it with their own consciences.

The tragedy reaches its climax in the fact that, so far as Great Britain and Germany in particular are concerned, war might have been avoided. That is to say, in the abstract and under more favourable conditions, it might, and conceivably would, have been avoided. It would be another thing to say that, under the actual conditions as they were presented to our statesmen, any other result than that which actually followed was possible. Again, I am thinking, not of an abstract and ideal state of things, but of the actual possibilities which our statesmen had before them. They were fallible men and could only act

on the balance of considerations presented to them at the time. Once more, they were not responsible for the extreme urgency and compression of time within which these considerations had to be weighed. I cannot take upon myself to say that they were wrong ; I believe that in the circumstances they were right. As I have said already, the decisive consideration seems to me to have been this. Were we prepared to stand by and see France crushed ? No, we were not ; and we ought not to have been. For the Germans, the crushing of France was a detail in a vast struggle. For us, it was more than this. It was the simple but decisive issue in the problem of conduct with which we had to deal. I believe that we answered it rightly.

We answered it without animosity against Germany. We answered it with a real respect and admiration for Germany as we conceived of her in normal times. But in the particular crisis we had to consider what we owed in the way of moral obligation to France as well as to Germany ; and not only that, but what we believed to be for the ultimate good of ourselves and of the rest of mankind. In my belief, if we had the same problem to decide again, we should decide it in the same way. To speak quite frankly, we could not trust the use that Germany would make of her victory. On the data before us, with such knowledge as we had of the state of opinion in Germany, of the kind of doctrine that was being preached in many organs of the German Press and by public men, and in the light also of German history, more especially for the last ten years, we had reason to think that Germany was the most restless, the most ambitious, and the most dangerous Power in Europe. Whether we were right or wrong in this opinion, it seems to me that in any case we had abundant justification for holding it.

II. *Mutual Misunderstandings.* So we went to war. And, whatever the tragedy which overshadows the process by which we came to go to war, there is not less of tragedy in the contemplation of the two nations as they are actually at war. So far as we and Germany are concerned, and more particularly from the side of Germany, I can only think of the war as a huge mistake. The Britain that Germany is fighting, or thinks she is fighting, is not the real Britain. It is Germany's own fault. She has constructed out of her own imagination an idea of Great Britain which certainly does not correspond to the reality. She ought to have known beforehand that it could not do so. No living aggregation of forty million human beings is made up, or should be supposed to be made up, of such constituent elements as Germany imagines, of envy, hatred, and malice, of hypocrisy and lies, of all evil thinking and evil speaking. To judge by the language which many Germans use of us as a nation ; to judge by the language which all Germans use—so far as I can see—without any public exception, of our Government and those who guide the policy of our people—we are compounded of these elements, and practically of no others. It is, as I have said, not merely a libel upon Great Britain, it is a libel upon human nature. The positive evidence for it is infinitesimal as compared with the conclusion it is made to carry. But really, it does not rest upon evidence ; it rests upon a huge mental assumption, arrived at by a process which does not deserve to be called thought. That the Germans, of all people, should allow themselves to lapse into such a process would be to me almost incredible, if it were not a fact.

It would be affectation on my part if I were to pretend that our judgement of Germany is equally erroneous. We are well aware that the Germany we are fighting is not

the real Germany. But it is more like the real Germany than the Britain which our adversaries depict for themselves is the real Britain. The real Germany, the good Germany, the Germany that we all admire, has handed itself over for the time to that other Germany which was and is still bent on fighting. I do not mean by this to construct for myself a military Germany, all bad, and a pacific Germany, all good. I know that the two conceptions run subtly into each other. I know that Germany as a whole is consciously and deliberately following the lead given to it. Yet I do not believe that we in this country think of Germany as a mere abstraction made up of a bundle of fundamental vices.

I will try to draw a picture of the way in which we do conceive of Germany. We think of her as a noble nation for a time *gone wrong*. We think we can see how she came to go wrong. It does sometimes happen both to individuals and to nations that for a time, for a whole period of their existence, they go off the main lines of the world's advance ; they become, like Hamlet, ' jangled, out of tune and harsh '. And, in proportion to their intrinsic greatness and the coherence of their parts, they go wrong with system and method and on a great scale. *Peccant fortiter*. The disaster is most complete when it is based upon principle, when behind it there is a whole theory of conduct. It goes without saying that in such a case, where the nation is really great, the qualities of greatness remain, but they are unhappily blended. Good and bad are subtly intermingled ; it is hard to say where the one ends and the other begins. But at the bottom of all there is sure to be a loss of faith—a loss of faith in human nature, a loss of the ideal and spiritual in the conception both of means and of ends. The ideal does not wholly disappear, but it is made subservient to the

material; the higher elements are compelled to serve the lower.

This is what we think has happened to Germany. It goes back to the middle of the last century. From that time onwards there has been a very marked and very rapid increase in German power. And then there has been a natural tendency to generalize from the particular methods which led to this increase of power and to erect them into rules of conduct. In one of the German pamphlets—I cannot at the moment remember which—I came across a special benediction on Bismarck's manipulation of the Ems telegram: 'Blessed be the hand which traced those lines'. That is significant. Wrong does not become right because it succeeds. And that is precisely where the German mistake lies. They have taken as their main, and even as their sole criterion, success. It is not surprising that in the process a certain element of miscalculation should have entered in. It is not surprising that, here and there, certain items in the summing up should have escaped them. For instance, one of the most marked characteristics of belligerent Germany has been its extraordinary self-confidence, its extraordinary consciousness of strength and capacity. It has many most legitimate grounds for this consciousness. It really is extraordinarily strong. It has devoted its best energies for years to building up this fabric of strength, and it has succeeded. And so it has come to think of itself as almost invincible; it has set down its victories to pure heroism and superior ability.

But I cannot help asking whether, in doing this, it has allowed quite enough for advantages of another kind, which do not depend altogether upon superior prowess. In the Danish War of 1864, Denmark alone had no chance. It was overwhelmed from the first by weight of numbers.

In the Prussian and Austrian War of 1866, Prussia had not only the advantage of organization and leadership ; it had also the needle-gun. As against France in 1870, Germany had not only two of these advantages, but in addition to them a great superiority of numbers. Certainly the campaign of Sedan was a fine achievement ; but it was easier than it might seem. The French were fighting at a great disadvantage in every engagement but one (Mars-la-Tour) ; and by that time the Germans had gained the moral ascendancy, which counts for so much.

So there grew up the belief in German invincibility in war. Then, to this were added the wonderful triumphs of forty years of peace. Let us not deduct one iota from these. They were richly deserved. They were the result of genuine qualities and of systematic preparation, which we can freely recognize and praise.

Thus, a full half-century of unparalleled advance has borne its natural fruits. A sublime (but excessive) self-confidence has led to a sublime (but excessive) self-assertion. Germany has looked round the world, and compared the actual place which it occupies in the world with the place which it feels capable of occupying, and which it thinks that it ought by right to occupy. In particular, it turns its gaze upon the British Empire. It is natural that it should begin to institute comparisons ; and perhaps it is also natural that these comparisons should take the form of a counting up of possessions. It is a pity that it should take this form ; for, after all, the British Empire is not exactly a possession like a landed estate or a sum of money at the bank. It is a group of peoples standing to each other in a great variety of relationships and bound together by a great variety of ties. To much of it Great Britain stands rather in the relation of trustee than in that of owner. And the one best justification of the relation-

ship is that in such vastly preponderant degree it is willingly accepted and conjoined with a sense of high obligation to seek the welfare of all who come within it and to render a good account of the stewardship which it entails.

The British Empire is a product of history. And (as we have seen) its history, like its status, is extremely varied. One might conceive that some higher power, like the ancient goddess Fortune, had presided over its origins. But the amount of actual violence involved in these is less than might be supposed. Much has come by what may be called the natural process of settlement, much also has come under due forms of law. In Germany's present mood, it is to be feared that this will only aggravate the offence. The right of conquest is recognized and regarded as an exhibition of virtue, while to shelter oneself behind legal forms is regarded only as hypocrisy. It is not to be wondered at that some of the instances of this should excite German indignation, though we may feel innocent about them. The history of the protectorate of Cyprus is a case in point. We made ourselves responsible for the administration of this island, as part of a comprehensive policy for the regeneration of Turkey, which was meant in perfect good faith, although it lapsed and nothing came of it. The gradual extension of British power over Egypt and the Sudan is another example. Cecil Rhodes was an empire-maker, and as such he is honoured in Germany; but we cannot be surprised if a cry like 'The Cape to Cairo Railway' should be set down as a glaring instance of British arrogance.

It behoves us to look these things in the face, and weigh them calmly. I believe that many good Britons are prepared to do this. I believe they are conscious

that Fortune has dealt more kindly with them than it has with other peoples, more particularly Germany. I believe they would admit that in the society of nations Germany has not got all that she deserves. It is due to the fact that Germany entered upon her inheritance late, and when she was ready to join in the competition the prizes had already been awarded. It is with nations as it is with individuals. One man draws a prize, where another draws a blank. But, as a rule, we accept our neighbour's good luck, and would never think of quarrelling with him about it. So the only principle that can hold good for the society of nations is the principle of 'live and let live', that each should cultivate his own plot to the best of his ability. If Germany had been willing to act on this principle, there would have been no war.

I quite agree with the author of one of the latest and best of the German pamphlets that have reached me, Professor Dr. Erich Marcks, that, as between Great Britain and Germany, there was no necessity for war. The two nations had no irreconcilable quarrel. If their differences were not actually settled, they were at least on the way to be settled.

Great Britain has gone to war in a quarrel that is not her own. She had formed a friendship with France, and, when it became clear that German policy involved the crushing of France, she was not going to stand by and see it done. Along with France was the small neutral state Belgium, and we were among the guarantors of Belgian neutrality. This double obligation brought us into the conflict. If Germany had abstained from attacking France and from violating the neutrality of Belgium, no grievance and no jealousy of our own would ever have drawn us into the fray.

It is true that we, like most of the rest of the world, had been led to doubt the pacific intention of Germany. The French Yellow Book, the reports of American travellers, the speeches of prominent German public men, the activity of various patriotic leagues, and the constant increases of the German Army and Navy, all seemed evidence of a bellicose spirit that was likely to issue in war as soon as a favourable opportunity offered.

It seemed to us that Germany might easily have had peace if she had wished it. She ought never to have allowed the Austrian Note to Serbia to be issued in the form it was. Having allowed the issue, she might still, by a clear hint to Austria, have brought the negotiations into a way that led towards settlement. The fact that on the very day on which a peaceful solution began to seem possible, Germany herself took a step which made it impossible, tells seriously against her.

Whatever may be the true interpretation to be put upon all these things, in any case they conveyed the impression, both to belligerents and to neutrals the whole world over, that Germany wanted war, and was prepared to win the greatest advantage from war.

It was because our statesmen shared in this view—and in any case they surely had a great deal of substantial reason for sharing in it—that our country, unprepared and reluctant as it was, found itself committed to hostilities. Its real attitude was like that of Shakespeare's Brutus towards Shakespeare's Caesar. Whatever the Germans' animosity towards us, we had no real animosity against them. We might easily paraphrase Brutus's speech. As Germany loved us, we are grieved; as she was fortunate, we rejoiced at it; as she was valiant, we honour her; but, as she was ambitious,

we are fighting her. There is tears for her love, joy for her fortune, honour for her valour, and war for her ambition.

Of course the Germans deny the ambition. But the evidence is before the world, and posterity will judge. If, instead of denying it altogether, they had put in a plea in mitigation of judgement, they would have a stronger case. If they contented themselves with carefully following the connected chain of acts in which their ambition expressed itself, pointing out the natural sequence by which one step led to another, and distinguishing between those elements in the chain which are admitted to be lawful and those which the voice of disinterested opinion condemns, they would have a better chance of obtaining at least a considerate, and even a sympathetic, verdict. But, by pitching their claims too high and asserting what they are not in a position to prove, they have turned the sympathies of the world against them.

It is not merely particular acts or groups of acts that we are fighting, but the whole body of doctrine that goes with them. We consider that these doctrines, if they established themselves, would be fraught with unrest, danger, and mutual distrust for the nations of civilized mankind.

III. *Aims and Problems.* In raising these questions, we are really passing over from the justification of the war at its beginnings, in its causes and motives, to its justification at the end in the aims which the different combatants have set before themselves. It is, to my mind, very important that these aims should be carefully and deliberately stated, with a full attempt to distinguish between what is tenable in them and what is not.

There are two definite concrete objects, which this country at least must set steadily before itself and never lose sight of. It cannot rest until Belgium and the occupied provinces of France have been replaced, as nearly as is humanly possible, in the position in which they were before the war. This alone is a gigantic task, and to bring it about will strain our resources to the uttermost. But, beyond these tangible results, a great effort must be made to bring about others which are more intangible and spiritual. The diplomatists of the contending nations will have before them a task of extraordinary complexity and difficulty in satisfying the claims of the different nationalities in revising the map of Europe—and even of the world—on more natural and equitable lines.

But it would be wrong not to make use of this unparalleled opportunity to place the whole theory of public law and the relations between nations on a more stable and satisfactory footing. This is a task which will need not only diplomatists but historians and philosophers. It is to be hoped that, when the time comes, those who are at present our enemies will take up their share of the burden and make to the common stock of learning and wisdom the best contribution they can. I cannot acquit them of blame for the part they have played in the past. They have allowed such teaching as that of Nietzsche, Treitschke, and Bernhardi to be made an instrument of national Chauvinism. They ought rather to have grappled with it boldly from the first, to have subjected it to searching criticism, and to have done all in their power to elicit from it the elements of right and truth, while counteracting and sterilizing the elements in it that are immoral and wrong.

It has become too much the custom in this country

to talk of 'crushing Prussian militarism'. This is proposed as one of the main objects of the war.

I cannot help thinking it highly desirable that we should do all we can to criticize, correct, and chasten the language that we use on this head.

I am well aware of the evil of excessive militarism. I believe that Prussian militarism in particular has a good deal to answer for in connexion with this war. Still, I deprecate the idea that what we call Prussian militarism can be crushed by force of arms. It is a spirit, a temper, and yet more, a national—or rather imperial—spirit and temper. As such, it cannot be crushed by force; if we think it can, we deceive ourselves.

The things of the spirit can only be judged and corrected by the spirit, and the things of a nation can only be effectively judged and corrected by the nation, not by force from outside.

I do not doubt that, when the Germans see their duty clearly marked out before them, they will face it with all their natural tenacity, conscientiousness, and courage. It is to be hoped that, when the war is over, we shall enter upon a new period of international co-operative thought, in which the nations will join—not perhaps round a table, but by contributions to a joint discussion, which shall not be allowed to drop till the work before it is done.

I hope that my country, which, I quite believe, has gone into this struggle with clean hands and a good heart, in defence of peoples that were in danger of being wronged and oppressed, will not commit the mistake which we attribute to the enemy of trying to force its own rule and its own ideas on all that is best and most patriotic in the nations it is fighting. The true policy I have no doubt is, not to alienate the patriotism on the

other side and stiffen its resistance, but rather to seek to enlist it in the service of a larger, nobler, and more humane ideal, in which the lesser national aims may be taken up and incorporated.

IV. *Final Retrospect and Prospect.*—My own belief is that, when the time comes for the Germans to review the history of this war in a really calm and objective spirit, there are many things on which they will look back with genuine regret. The one point on which I conceive that this regret will amount to remorse, is their treatment of Belgium. I know that they banish all sentiment from war. But, unless they include under the head of sentiment the most elemental principles of justice, it must dawn upon them by degrees that their invasion of Belgium was unlike almost all other invasions. The Belgian people was one with which they had absolutely no outstanding quarrel. They have confessed themselves that their invasion was against all law, a deliberate act of wrong. But surely, if ever there was a case in which a belligerent was bound to conduct war chivalrously, with all possible forbearance and generosity, it was this case beyond all others. I do not wish on this occasion to join in the outcry about atrocities. From the first I have tried, for myself, to make the least of them rather than the most. I should wish to give the benefit of the doubt wherever it is possible to do so. But by this time the stories have had at least a preliminary testing from Belgian and French Commissions, and it is to be feared that too much of them must be accepted as true. A distinction must of course be drawn between two classes of acts, (*a*) those in which either in the heat of battle or more or less under the excitement of battle individual soldiers or small groups have been guilty of outrages that everybody

would condemn, and (*b*) those which have been done by order, whether of subordinate officers or of the higher commands. In regard to the first of these classes, we cannot help being struck by the fact that there seems to be in this war a distinct falling off from the standard set in 1870–1. Then the German army came through in the main with an honourable record. Their best well-wishers can hardly say as much now, whether as to such minor matters as pillaging and drunkenness or graver things. As to the deliberate severities and destruction, for which the higher authorities must be held responsible, we sometimes see a strange line of defence. No less a person than Dr. W. von Bode, the well-known expert and director of the Berlin Museum, while naturally minimizing the amount of injury done to monuments of ancient art, lays stress upon the learned study which the Germans have devoted to the art of other nations than their own. But surely this is rather an aggravation of the offence. It is usually thought to be more venial to sin through ignorance than to sin in the full light of knowledge. But I am not sure that one of the worst things for which the Germans will have to answer is not the huge fines inflicted upon the towns and cities of Belgium. These are peculiarly cold-blooded and peculiarly in conflict with what I have just been urging as to the special conditions of the war in the case of Belgium. It is a veritable case of the Wolf and the Lamb. If Germany had had any serious cause of complaint against Belgium, there might have been more excuse ; it shocks the conscience of mankind when the victim of wrong-doing is punished instead of the perpetrator.

The whole question of chivalry in war is raised in an acute form. As between chivalry and extreme rigour, the Germans have deliberately chosen the latter. And

yet, one might have thought that their own experience pointed the other way. They have to some extent followed a different rule on land and on water. I am afraid that considerable reservation must be made on both elements. On neither have they shown any scrupulous regard for the lives of non-combatants. It is to be hoped that on this head the usages of war may be more clearly defined and better observed in the future. But within certain limits at least, the German navy has been seen to better advantage than the army. There have been a few conspicuous examples of the courtesies and generosities that are consistent with warfare. But has anything substantial been lost by these? Has it not rather been pure gain? The world at large would think better of German soldiers and sailors in a body, if all of them fought in the spirit of Captain von Müller and Lieutenant Hersing.

The fact is, it is to be feared, that the lower levels of practice in both the army and the navy are too much in accord with the general German ideas about war. The horrible doctrine of Terrorism plays far too large a part. It is one ugly branch of the general doctrine of Force;[1] and it has its root in the same cynical view of human nature. It is not true that men can only be got to do right through compulsion and fear. The same fundamental fallacy seems to run through the different departments of German thinking. The disparagement of international law is of a piece with the spirit of militarism. It does not follow that there is no such thing as international morals because there is no superior drill-sergeant to keep discipline and order amongst nations. St. Paul, when he wrote to the Romans, could appeal to the pre-

[1] There is a very pertinent discussion of the German doctrine of Force in Mr. Lindsay's pamphlet, *War against War*.

sence among them of pagans who, not having a law, were a law to themselves. And that is, surely, the greatest triumph of civilization, to produce in men that attitude of the conscience which is independent of threats and penalties, which is capable of discovering for itself what is the just and right course to take, and which chooses that course without being under the influence of fear.

There is no reason why this should not hold good for nations just as much as for individuals. And as a matter of fact, apart from Germany, it is in this direction that progress has been actually made during the last generation—in the direction of restricting the appeal to force and strengthening the appeal to conscience, of seeking the solution of quarrels through full and free discussion, of bringing to bear the enlightened opinion of neutrals, of defining and digesting the principles of international law, of improving the methods of arbitration.

It is really no argument against these pacific methods that they are not yet perfected, that their application in the past has left something to be desired, that the relations of the greater and the smaller powers in regard to them are not easy of adjustment. Every great movement of this kind must pass through a tentative stage. But it is no less true that from one point to another there is a steady advance ; and there is every reason to hope that this advance will be continued.

In one respect the present war goes far to supply an answer to the advocates of war. It shows that war is really not necessary to keep alive the heroism of nations. It shows what untold reserves of spirit and courage may be latent beneath the surface of the most peaceful of peoples. The price that has had to be paid for this demonstration is terrible to contemplate ; but at least the demonstration is there.

We are indeed in the midst of a number of most urgent problems, which will tax the wisest heads of this generation for their solution. In part—in large part—they will have to be worked out in the very process by which the war is brought to an end. The world will greatly need in that process the co-operation of Germany. Every nation will be upon its mettle; and Germany, I cannot help thinking, most of all. For, if I am not mistaken, she will have a double task, internal as well as external. She will have to revise her own ideals, and to fit them once more into a framework that can be common to the world at large.

I have not attempted to disguise my belief—I have rather aimed at bringing it out as clearly as I can—that in this last phase of its history the German mind has gone seriously wrong. When I say seriously, I do not mean ignobly. It is a wonderful spectacle, the Germany of these last fifty years. There has been greatness enough in it—colossal greatness. But the greatness has been seamed with faults and flaws. Two things in particular I will mention, which are perhaps more fundamental than the rest. It seems to me that the statesmen and leaders of German thought and action have been too impatient. They have tried to force the pace. They have not been content to let well alone. With the nation's prosperity advancing at a rate that I suppose must be unparalleled in history, they have not been willing to let the fruits of it ripen and fall into their lap in due process of nature; but they have sought to forestall that process, and so have been drawn into the excessive resort to force.

And this is not the only thing about them that has been excessive. They have been led to form an excessive opinion of themselves; and along with this has gone an excessive disparagement and contempt for other peoples.

In this way they have let themselves be blinded to facts, with the consequence that many of their most important calculations have turned out wrong.

If we set ourselves to contemplate the process historically, it is so natural that it may well seem almost inevitable. To save it from being inevitable, there was needed a constant and searching self-criticism which, by an unfortunate coincidence, was just at this time more than usually wanting. We seem to understand it all only too well. And to understand is always a long step on the road of charity and forgiveness.

Still the tragedy remains. And, at the bottom of the tragedy, is really the desertion of Christian standards and the acceptance for the time of standards that are fundamentally not Christian.

I do not doubt for a moment that in the end Germany will see her mistake, and grow out of these. We shall hail the penitent's return ; and I earnestly hope that we on our part shall do as little as we can to make that return difficult for him. We want his help too much ; and we shall want it even more in the future.

The history has been that of so many quarrels.

> Alas ! they had been friends in youth ;
> But whispering tongues can poison truth ;
> And constancy lives in realms above ;
> And life is thorny ; and youth is vain ;
> And to be wroth with one we love,
> Doth work like madness in the brain.
> And thus it chanced, as I divine,
> With Roland and Sir Leoline.
> Each spake words of high disdain
> And insult to his heart's best brother :
> They parted—ne'er to meet again !
> But never either found another
> To free the hollow heart from paining—
> They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
> Like cliffs which had been rent asunder ;

A dreary sea now flows between ;—
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

I will venture upon a prophecy. I will venture upon it because at bottom I have a profound belief in the essential honesty and truthfulness of the German character—notwithstanding all that may at this moment be quoted to the contrary. A day will come when the scales will fall, both from our adversaries' eyes and from our own. They will see us, not as distorting fancy has painted us, but as we really are. They will discover their one great error—that our motives have not been the far-fetched malignity which they have ascribed to us, but at least natural and intelligible. If we have been foemen, we have been at least honest and honourable foemen, and foemen who have proved worthy of their steel. And we shall see them, no longer as the victims of a strong delusion, but as the friends and allies of a more distant past. We shall see the real Germany, the fundamental Germany, slough off this spotted skin which through an unfortunate train of circumstances has grown about her. We shall see the real Germany emerge, chastened and purified by suffering, with brain cleared and conscience quickened, speaking the old great language and haunted by the old far-off visions, the Germany of Bach and Beethoven, the Germany of Lessing and Goethe, the Germany of Helmholtz and Virchow, the Germany of Ranke and Mommsen, the Germany of many a book that stands upon our own shelves, our companions and our teachers, the product of concentrated and disciplined thinking and of laborious and patient toil. This Germany will return to us, and we shall look once more in its face, and grasp it once more by the hand. And the clouds of war will roll away, like an evil dream.

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